

THUS DIED AUSTRIA

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Thus Died
AUSTRIA

By
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Foreword

THE AUTHOR of the present book proposes to give an account, as free from prejudice and biased sentiment as is humanly possible, of the facts which led to the fall of Austria.

It was an Austrian, "the great Austrian" as he is in the habit of calling himself, Adolf Hitler of Braunau, Upper Austria, who himself effaced from the map of Europe a country possessing its own, singular character and a very personal charm. It was he, an Austrian, who amalgamated it with Greater Germany within whose boundaries it will henceforth be merely a province—the "easternmost outpost" of the German Empire. Only history will be able to tell whether his act has brought the blessing of true happiness to the Austrians and to their country. A study of the past, however, proves that with all its means the former Danubian Republic fought a vigorous battle against the abolition of its independence as a State, and that it had to give way finally to the overpowering weight of the German military machine—and of other weapons at the disposal of and employed by the Third Reich.

The author has been a personal witness of the long struggle waged for Austria, and in his account relies largely on his own experience up to the first month after Herr Hitler's entry into Vienna. Having been in a position to watch a good deal of what occurred behind the scenes of European history during this period, he is by no means blind to the grave misjudgments and mistakes made by Austria herself and her leaders, as well as by third powers, and he endeavours, therefore, to present his story in no other manner than that which would have to be adopted by any historian of strict objectivity and impartiality. He regards the end of Austria as a symptom of the times, and while believing that it may yet cause very wide repercussions, is concerned here with putting nothing but the undisputable facts before his readers,

supported by the evidence of documents and verbal quotations of authenticity beyond doubt.

It is too early to say yet whether the national union of Austria with the German Reich, along the lines laid down by the law of National-Socialism, is or will prove to be a truly historic achievement. But for one who has known Austria and her people it is difficult to believe that the particular culture of this free, lovable, beautiful, and serene land, whose art and whose character comprise almost innumerable Germanic, Slavonic, Latin, and Magyar elements welded into such a unique harmony called Austrian, will readily exchange its charming "Schlamperei" and everlasting hospitality for the super-militarized, ruthlessly organized and all too frugal life of the Third Reich. It is difficult, indeed, to believe that such a land can look forward under Hitler to anything other than rapid decay and ultimate destruction.

Therefore, this book is dedicated to Austria as she was.

LONDON,

June, 1938.

NOTE. The author's acknowledgments are due to Messrs. Cassell and Co., Ltd., for permission to quote from Dr. Kurt von Schuschnigg's book, *Farewell Austria*, published by them.

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Friday, March 11, at 5.30 p.m.

ROUND THE building of the State Opera the big cars of the Vienna police are standing in readiness. Mounted police are encamped under the arcades of the opera. A crowd of many thousands, shouting and yelling, is surging through the Kaerntnerstrasse, Vienna's most fashionable shopping street, and the adjoining wide avenue of the Opernring. On one side of the street National-Socialists, all wearing over-size swastika badges and emblems, are shouting in chorus "Heil Hitler!" monotonously and without interruption. "Heil Hitler!"—"One People—One Reich!"—"Down with the Plebiscite!" On the opposite side of the street supporters of the Patriotic Front with their red-white-red badges keep answering in chorus "Heil Schuschnigg!"—"Heil Oesterreich!" Now and then motor-cars draped with red-white-red bunting and filled with enthusiastic supporters of Dr. Schuschnigg try to break through the human wall formed by the multitude; police instantly dash into the crowds, their assault cars with their shrill sirens trying to reach the battle-grounds of the two opposing camps. The pavement is covered with a thick carpet of leaflets and handbills bearing the inscription "For Schuschnigg—Yes!"; more leaflets, still greater quantities of handbills are showered down on the crowd from cars and from aeroplanes flying low over the city; tramcars find their rails blocked and are unable to move either forwards or backwards, all traffic comes to a standstill, passers-by are kicked and shoved and punched without knowing by whom or why. Sometimes they are beaten up. The din of shrieking and yelling grows and soars and becomes more deafening every minute.

At the corner of the Kaerntnerstrasse and the Opernring the Patriotic Front have installed a huge loud-speaker. The voice speaking from it at the moment is that of Herr Hans von Becker, Chief of the Propaganda Department of the Patriotic

Front. It announces: "Contrary to all other information the Patriotic Front is authorized to state that the plebiscite announced by the Federal Chancellor Dr. von Schuschnigg for Sunday March 13 will take place in whatever circumstances." An uproarious howling from many thousand throats is the answer, frenzied applause and wild cheers for Schuschnigg on one side, frantic shouts of protest, enraged whistling, and furious invectives against him from the other. And now and then, as if by command the hoarse voices of the Hitlerites are raised with the relentless "Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil! "

Two police assault cars, accompanied by the shrill howling of sirens, are forcing their way towards a thick throng of people, where National-Socialists and members of the Patriotic Front are engaged in a fierce brawl with fists and sticks. The police have formed themselves into a wedge and, with drawn sabres and rubber truncheons, are pushing into the fighting masses. With a resolute grip each policeman grasps one of the brawlers by his right coat lapel. Patriotic Front members wear their red, white, and red ribbons, Nazis their swastikas. That makes it easy for the police to separate the two camps. With an energetic push the red-white-reds are swept over to the left, and the Nazis to the right. Through the corridor thus formed the police cars pass slowly up on patrol, followed by police on foot, who form a cordon to keep the two sides apart.

Three days' practice has proved this to be the most effective and bloodless method of separating the opponents. The police had only just evolved it two days before, to reduce heavy casualties. On the previous Wednesday no fewer than twenty-seven seriously injured had had to be taken away by ambulances.

That was the Wednesday on which Dr. Schuschnigg, the Federal Chancellor, had announced in his speech at Innsbruck that on Sunday, March 13, 1938, a plebiscite would be held throughout Austria.

Those in favour of a free, independent, Christian, and corporative Austria were to vote "Yes".

To Schuschnigg this plebiscite seemed to offer a last chance of stemming the tide of National-Socialist propaganda which, since his agreement with Herr Hitler on February 12, 1938, had

exceeded all previous limits, and of proving to the world that the majority of the Austrian people was opposed to the ideas of National-Socialism. The number of Nazi supporters in Austria at that time was reliably estimated not to exceed 30 or 35 per cent. The Government was confident that in a free election between 65 and 70 per cent. of all votes cast would be in favour of Schuschnigg and an independent Austria.

The announcement of a plebiscite, though repeatedly demanded in earlier years and months by the National-Socialists themselves, produced at first the effect of a bombshell among Nazis in Austria as well as in the Reich. National-Socialist circles were only too aware of the probability that in a free election they could not hope to obtain anything in the neighbourhood of an absolute majority. After several hours of perplexity and embarrassment they finally decided to mobilize every available means to prevent the election of March 13 from taking place. Independent of diplomatic and military pressure which was instantly brought into play from Berlin, during the late hours of the night of March 9 they mobilized everybody they could get hold of to bring the additional pressure of the man in the street to bear on the Government. That same night National-Socialist supporters were transported in great numbers on lorries and trucks to Vienna, Graz, and Linz. During the early hours of the night these consignments were composed mainly of very young people wearing the swastika who were simply to demonstrate against Schuschnigg and the plebiscite. Later in the day more and more of a very different type of man arrived, doubtful-looking elements, most of them, and suspiciously badly clad, who reinforced with their fresh voices the now worn and hoarse throats of the youngsters.

From Wednesday, March 9, onwards National-Socialist strength swelled visibly with each hour that passed. At earlier demonstrations in Vienna the crowds had almost invariably marched up to the wide open squares which faced the Parliament House, the Town Hall, and the Votivkirche, which could accommodate large gatherings. From the very outset of the events of March 1938, the much narrower spaces in front of the Opera House and the Kaerntnerstrasse had been chosen as objectives for the demonstrators. This change of tactics was due

to several reasons. About a year ago a "German Tourist Agency" had been established by the Reich authorities opposite the Opera and at the corner of the Kaerntnerstrasse and the Mahlerstrasse. On its premises an over-life-size portrait of Herr Hitler was on exhibition. It had been hung in such a way that by day and by night it could be seen clearly by every one in the street. At night it was brightly illuminated. From the day of its establishment the tourist bureau was recognized as the National-Socialist stronghold in the heart of Vienna. A large National-Socialist demonstration had already taken place on the day of its opening, and whenever later on Hitler's men were to stage some propaganda demonstration in Vienna, they invariably gathered in front of the "German Tourist Agency" or the German Legation.

Besides, this particular parade ground had other advantages to offer to the first Nazi demonstrations. The square in front of the Opera House is comparatively narrow, and a crowd of only several hundred people which would have been completely lost on the vast squares before the Town Hall or the Votivkirche could give the impression of an enormous multitude. It was known, therefore, beforehand that the Nazis would always choose the Opera as the starting-point for their demonstration. There was one final psychological advantage: much more than the famous St. Stephen's Square or any other place the Opernplatz was the true heart of Vienna. Particularly during the late hours of the afternoon, traffic at this junction used to be very heavy, and a few hundred people shouting and swarming the streets could easily produce quite an alarming effect.

Between March 9 and March 11 the demonstrations before the Opera and the "German Tourist Agency" had increased in number and in din from day to day. During the mornings the supporters of Schuschnigg held the streets almost indisputably, either marching in strong bodies through the streets carrying their red-white-red banners and flags, or driving in lorries, decorated with their colours along the Ring and through the main thoroughfares. Enthusiastically acclaimed there by passers-by, they would throw their propaganda handbills into the crowd and proceed. Towards four o'clock in the afternoon

the National-Socialists began to march up. The later it became the more swastikas appeared on the Ringstrasse, while the supporters of Schuschnigg, having done their day's work, gradually withdrew and as orderly citizens went home to their dinners.

On March 11, however, the Nazi demonstrations began much earlier in the day. A sufficient number of unemployed and countryfolk to last the whole day had been called into Vienna to lend increased vigour to the demonstrations. Towards 5.30 P.M. between 40,000 and 50,000 National-Socialists had gathered in the narrow area of the Inner City of Vienna. The Vienna police hitherto, when faced with even much larger demonstrations, had always managed successfully to prevent the demonstrators from entering the Inner City. But this time they allowed them to proceed into this area without any obstruction. The reason was very simple. From February 15, Dr. Seyss-Inquart, now Reich Governor of the Province of Austria, had been Minister of the Interior and of the Department of Security. The police had received orders from their new chief not only to let the National-Socialists march through the city unhindered but also to treat them with particular leniency and tolerance.

That afternoon I was on duty in the Inner City. Equipped with a special police permit which allowed me to pass through all cordons, my companion and I were able to penetrate into the actual battle-grounds, although everybody else, even if he had business to do in one of the streets thronged by the demonstrators, was quietly ordered to stay away and to retreat into a side-street. The disputed areas, cordoned off by the police, were thus reserved exclusively for the demonstrators. I noticed at once that this time the police were dealing far less rigorously with the Nazis than on all preceding occasions. Except in cases of actual beatings-up, where they intervened, they just let the swastika supporters pass freely within the borders of the areas allotted to them. Wherever the scrimmage outgrew reasonable proportions, assault cars were directed to the danger points and the crowd, shouting and yelling, was hustled politely and without the use of force into the adjoining streets. Individual demonstrators trying to sneak back from the side-streets into the forbidden areas were caught by the police and taken back in

small batches to where they had come from. All this proceeded in an entirely peaceful manner, and one could not help feeling that at that point at least units of the police known to be in actual sympathy with the Nazis had been put in charge. The proportion of National-Socialists among the police was then reliably estimated to be about the same as among the rest of the population, namely hardly in excess of 30 or 35 per cent. I observed in several cases actual discrimination against Schuschnigg's supporters, and workers.

When groups of workers had made their first appearance in the city on the evening of March 10, wearing red carnation buttonholes and carrying red flags, the police resorted instantly to a most ruthless use of rubber truncheons and sabres. As there had been several seriously injured, the leaders of the workers had given orders that for the time being the masses of the working-class people were not to take part in the demonstrations. Long columns of workers from Floridsdorf and Favoriten, the Vienna working-class districts, who had started out on a march towards the Inner City, were stopped half-way and told by members of the Patriotic Front and by their own Trade Union Leaders to return, as severe bloodshed would otherwise become unavoidable.

The surging crowd which filled the City on that afternoon was composed of all conceivable elements of the population—except the workers. When they noticed that there was no obstruction to be feared on the part of the police, the National-Socialists became bolder and bolder. Attacks against individual Government supporters as well as harmless passers-by of Jewish or similar appearance became more and more frequent. Supporters and opponents of the Government shouted across at each other from windows and balconies, and all sorts of solid objects, sticks, flower-pots, and boxes were thrown into the street. Mounted police tried to penetrate the crowd to restore order. But the crowd was like the sea at the height of a storm. There was no mastering it. Driven back here, it would suddenly reappear there. From all directions new and endless masses kept pressing forward.

We had to beat our retreat, and escaped into the Café Fenster-gucker, a well-known Viennese coffee-house situated at the

corner of the Kaerntnerstrasse and the Walfischgasse. Its large windows afforded an excellent view of the whole area of the Opera Square. Feeling there too was running high. The place was packed, and people were seized with an almost indescribable excitement, everybody being conscious that the next few hours would bring a decision, whatever it might be. From the telephone booth I tried to ring up a number of colleagues and friends to collect information about the situation in other parts of the city. The first man I got on the telephone told me that, from news received from the frontiers, one could expect the entry of the German troops into Austria that same evening.

Hardly had I left the telephone booth when I noticed, through the window of the café, several motor cycles adorned with huge swastika pennons trying to force their way through the howling crowds. But they were surrounded immediately by large groups of demonstrators. The howling rose to a thunderous storm, but from behind the glass windows it was difficult to see much detail. More motor-cycles appeared. This time they carried the red, white, and red pennons of the Government. Again the demonstrators gathered excitedly round their riders. Fists were raised, sticks suddenly swung through the air, threats were audible. . . .

But what every one expected, the inevitable clash, was still postponed.

Even before we had time to push our way towards the door through the tables and people standing in the café, the crowd outside was already breaking up. Only a minute previously one would have thought it impossible ever to separate the furiously entangled opponents. Now, in utter amazement, I watched the tens of thousands disperse within a few moments to the four winds. It looked almost like a flight.

Five minutes later the street was empty.

Only the police cordons between pavement and pavement remained.

The howling and shrieking, the shouts and the yells had been deafening. But this sudden silence sent an ice-cold shudder down my spine. Nobody who has not witnessed these minutes

can imagine the paralysing terror of this ghastly quiet. There we stood, in the middle of the street, almost alone, and looked at each other.

"Something terrible must have happened."

My companion gave a silent nod. The silence was so oppressing that we hardly dared to speak.

Slowly, almost hesitatingly, we walked up the Kaerntnerstrasse towards St. Stephen's Square, our hearts beating with apprehension, our eyes vainly searching for a sign which would explain this sudden bewildering change. Everywhere the same oppressing, paralysing silence reigned, and everywhere police cordons stood in the utterly empty streets. It was ridiculous. At every cordon I had to produce my legitimation paper to be able to pass. Slowly we walked back to the Opera.

Suddenly from afar we heard a loud-speaker. We stopped at once in order not to lose a single word. Yet only fragments of an announcement reached us. ". . . to cancel, for the present moment, the plebiscite of March 13 . . . at a later period. . . ."

There was no need to listen any more. We knew what it meant.

"What will happen next?" my companion asked as we walked the last few paces almost automatically up to where the loud-speaker stood. But had we not told ourselves the answer already?

As we arrived at the loud-speaker a small group of people had gathered there already to wait in breathless anxiety for further announcements. But the wireless remained silent for some time. Meanwhile the police cordons gradually, almost reluctantly it seemed, broke up and dispersed. The mounted police, who had dismounted, got back on their horses, and assembled in long columns. One assault car after another slowly rolled off. A word of command was shouted, and the horses started moving. The loud clatter of their hoofs went *cloppety-clop* on the asphalt of the pavement, echoing strangely in the hollow and empty street. Suddenly a voice from the loud-speaker interrupted the clatter.

It was Dr. Schuschnigg's. For years it had been familiar to

every Austrian. Now it sounded somewhat odd, as if it refused to obey its master.

Like slow heavy drops his first words fell into the silence. But presently the voice of the last Austrian Chancellor won through the clatter of the retreating police, and became firm and steady:

“Austrian men and women!

“Austria has been confronted with a decision of utmost gravity. The Government of the German Reich have handed to the Federal President an ultimatum with a time limit attached which demands that the Federal President should appoint a new chancellor and cabinet at the nomination of the German Government. Unless this demand is complied with at once, the march of German troops into Austria is envisaged for this very hour.

“Reports have been spread to the effect that there have been workers’ disturbances, that blood has flowed, and that this Government is no longer capable of maintaining order. I wish to declare before the whole world that these reports are fabrications from beginning to end.

“The Federal President has charged me to inform the Austrian people that we are yielding to force. Because we will not allow German blood to be spilt at any price even in this grave hour, we have ordered our troops, in case the German march into Austria should be made, to withdraw without resistance and to await the decision of the next hours.

“The Federal President has entrusted General Schilhawsky with the supreme command of the Federal Army, and further orders to the troops will be given by him.

“Thus I take my leave from the Austrian people in this hour with a German word and wish from my heart: ‘God save Austria!’ ”

After he had ended the loud-speaker remained silent for a short moment. Then a string orchestra played Haydn’s variations of the Austrian National Anthem. Sustained, almost sobbing, the violins sang those melodies which for more than a century have been at the heart of all Austrians. The musicians surely knew what they were playing and why, and it was as if the notes of their song of farewell bore the woes of the whole nation.

Tears rolled down the cheeks of the few passers-by still standing round the loud-speaker.

Then they too slowly turned and walked away.

Austria, they knew, had expired.

It was Friday, March 11, 7.30 P.M.

Chancellor Dr. Schuschnigg was arrested half an hour after having finished his speech.

Herr Hitler demands Austria

ON SATURDAY, March 12, 1938, Adolf Hitler made his entry into Upper Austria.

He was born on April 20, 1889, at Braunau, on the Inn, in the province of Upper Austria, and as a poor house-painter's apprentice, rejected by his native country, in the spring of 1912 emigrated to Munich. From that time not for a single day has he been able to forget that his native country refused to recognize him. The whole of his intense love-hatred thenceforward was concentrated on this country.

When in 1924, during his term of imprisonment at the fortress of Landsberg, he sat down to write his book *My Struggle*, the very first lines of its opening chapter revealed his thoughts and feelings towards Austria.

"To-day I regard it as a happy destination," he writes, "that fate has made Braunau on the Inn the place of my birth. For this little town is situated on the very border of those two states whose reunion must appear, at least to us of the younger generation, the supreme task of our life, to be achieved by all possible means.

"German Austria must return to the great German motherland, and she will have to do so not merely for economic reasons. No, and a thousand times no! Even if this union should prove, from the economic point of view, to be irrelevant or even detrimental, it would yet have to take place. Peoples of one blood should belong to one Reich."

It is still possible to read in these opening lines the feeling of a fervent love for Austria, but only a few pages further on a profound hatred reveals itself when Hitler goes on to say:

"It was the fatal association between the young (German) Reich and the farce of the Austrian State which laid the foundation of and was ultimately responsible for the Great War and the collapse. And I may state here that in my earliest youth I

formed this opinion, which has never since left me, but has grown yet deeper and more definite,

"That the safety of the German nation presupposes the annihilation of Austria."

Particular emphasis is laid on these last lines in Hitler's book as they are printed in spaced-out lettering. A hundred pages later he repeats the argument and underlines it even more strongly when he writes:

"Since my heart has never cherished the Austrian monarchy but always and only a German Reich, the hour of the disruption of this state could necessarily appear to me only as the beginning of the salvation of the German nation.

"German Austria must come back to the German motherland!"

That was the guiding axiom which dominated all Hitler's ideas while he was still working at the organization of his party, and it became an *idée fixe*, a virtual obsession from the moment the former Upper Austrian had become the Leader and Chancellor of the Great German Reich.

Many things came to Hitler's aid and helped this, his guiding idea, to achieve final victory.

The idea of the "Anschluss", the union of Germany and Austria in one form or another, is not a new one, and it was not conceived by Hitler. After the collapse of the old Austrian Empire the union of Austria with the Reich was eagerly desired by large parts of the Austrian people. It was chiefly advocated in those circles which included the sworn enemies of Hitler; the Austrian Social-Democrats. When shortly after the overthrow of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918 a Social-Democratic Government came to power in Austria and promulgated a new constitution, the first paragraph of this constitution read: "German Austria is part of the German Reich." Soon after the formation of the new Cabinet led by the Social-Democrats, Dr. Renner, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Otto Bauer, who in February 1934 was in command of the Social-Democratic "Schutzbund" and later escaped to Brno in Czechoslovakia, went to Berlin to discuss with the leaders of the new German Republic the question of an "Anschluss", a

union of Austria and Germany. At the same time, by virtue of its new constitution, the country was given the official name of German Austria. This roused a strong protest from the victorious Allied Powers, it being laid down in the Peace Treaties that the union of the two States should be for ever forbidden. The Austrian Social-Democrats, who also in later times remained attached to the Reich through special ties of sympathy, had particular, although mostly party-political, reasons for wanting the Anschluss. Faced with the preponderantly Catholic tendencies of the remaining political forces in Austria, they naturally felt strongly drawn towards the German democracy as their most powerful potential ally.

Yet after the conclusion of the Peace Treaties, and in spite of the ban contained therein, the Anschluss idea never fell completely into abeyance as long as the Reich had not become National-Socialist. Particularly in those parts of Austria which were most fervently Catholic, like the provinces of Tyrol and Vorarlberg, propaganda for an Anschluss became so insistent during the years 1921 and 1922 that those provinces decided to hold a plebiscite of their own within their territories, and with an overwhelming majority proclaimed themselves in favour of a union with the Reich. It was only natural that these attempts were frustrated by the Western powers and the Little Entente as energetically as all their predecessors.

A last attempt to bring about a voluntary union of Austria and Germany was made in 1931. On March 21st, Dr. Schober, then Austrian Federal Chancellor, announced the so-called Schober-Curtius Plan of a German Austrian Customs Union. Both Dr. Schober and Dr. Curtius, the German Foreign Minister, were convinced that a union of the two States on a purely economic basis could not possibly be opposed on legal grounds. In France and Czechoslovakia it was, however, rightly recognized at once that such a customs union was necessarily only meant to be a prelude to a form of much closer political association to be realized at a later date. French reaction towards this economic plan against which, at least for the present, political weapons could not very well be brought into the field, was to institute economic counter-measures. When a few weeks later, in the beginning of May, the largest Austrian bank, the

Credit-Anstalt, was forced to apply to the banking institutions of the Western Powers for certain credits with which to bridge temporary difficulties, assistance of any kind or in any form was refused. The Credit-Anstalt consequently collapsed, and in the upheaval of the general economic crisis which followed and shook Austria and the whole of Central Europe to their foundations, the Schober-Curtius Plan disappeared without further ado. It is a small but interesting detail that, in order to prevent no more than an economic Anschluss, French policy actually contributed substantially to the severe aggravation of the international crisis.

Herr Hitler, at that time, knew only too well that the Anschluss idea was then favoured by a large proportion of the Austrian people, and not only in so-called national circles but just as much by the Social-Democrats and the Christian Social (Clerical) Party. He was equally aware, however, that these tendencies were contingent upon Germany remaining democratic. They virtually ceased to obtain from the day Hitler himself came to power. From January 30, 1933, onwards the Austrian Social-Democrats, and the Clerical Party with them, realized that under the new conditions prevailing in Germany a union meant nothing else but plain self-destruction. Just as they had hitherto desired this union, for reasons inherent in the ideals of democracy, the great majority of the Austrian people, after Hitler's accession to power, emphatically refused to enter into any further associations with the Third Reich. The profound and innermost democratic feelings of the Austrians and their strong and genuine Christianity were the elements truly responsible for this sudden and decisive change of attitude.

To this reversal of sympathies on the part of the Austrian people Herr Hitler remained by no means a stranger. No less could he be doubtful that from now on throughout the world strong forces were suddenly rallying in an effort to safeguard and preserve Austrian independence. Inside Austria these forces were the legitimist (monarchist) idea aiming at the restoration of the Habsburg dynasty, the Catholic Church and the Social-Democratic Party. Outside they were centred in France, the Little Entente and Italy. If he was determined to realize his heart's desire and unite Austria with Germany—

not to bring her back to the Reich, as he himself puts it, for the obvious reason that she actually never belonged to Germany since the days of the Holy Roman Empire—he had to drive these forces back step by step, and work at their systematic repression.

Surprisingly enough, in his struggle against his most dangerous opponent, the monarchist idea in Austria, Herr Hitler found powerful allies in France and the Little Entente.

The restoration of the Habsburg monarchy had been forbidden to Austria in the Peace Treaties just as strictly as the Anschluss. While France and the Little Entente feared that the Anschluss would result in strengthening Germany, the restoration of the Habsburg monarchy, if only on the throne of Austria, seemed to foreshadow to them the impending revival of monarchist claims in all other parts of the former monarchy. In many parts of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania, to say nothing of Hungary, the passing of the old monarchy was deeply mourned, especially for economic reasons. And it probably would not have been an altogether unreasonable and unjustified fear that the restoration of Archduke Otto to the throne of a Kingdom of Austria, would have exerted more than a magic attraction to great parts of Croatia and Slovakia, Hungary and those parts of Rumania known as Siebenbuergen.

Herr Hitler too in recent years had feared nothing so much as the monarchist question acquiring actuality in Austria. For the proclamation of the monarchy had become, during these last years, an even more favoured idea with the Austrians than the Anschluss. A recall of Archduke Otto to his fatherland would, in fact, have brought all Herr Hitler's aspirations to a sudden end.

The internal forces of resistance of a people are, on the whole, more difficult to break than the external ones. In the case of Austria the opposite seems to apply. While National-Socialism found considerable support among foreign nations in its struggle against the restoration of the Habsburgs, its fight against the resistance of the Social-Democratic and Clerical elements was greatly facilitated by the fact that these two forces

stood in sharp opposition to each other. It was only during the very last days of the struggle that they managed to bridge the differences which separated them, and united in a common front against the National-Socialist challenge. But then it was already too late.

The external forces of resistance could not be subdued as long as the balance of power in Europe was to the disadvantage of Germany. Only the rapid accumulation of Germany's armed strength and the winning of strong allies made it gradually possible for Hitler's heart's desire to approach fulfilment in the field of foreign policy.

There were, however, two other most powerful allies, apart from these forms of direct and indirect support, which helped German National-Socialism in its aspirations to an extent which, it seems, has hitherto not been fully realized: the sheer insanity of the system of Central European national frontiers, and the economic crisis. The severe obstructions to all export trade for which these frontiers were and are still responsible, unemployment which consequently brought these export industries to a virtual standstill, shortage of capital after the collapse of the Credit-Anstalt, all these factors tended constantly to create more and more unrest among the Austrian population. When Hitler assumed power in Germany, Austria had reached the top of her wave of unemployment. In February 1933 approximately 500,000 people were unable to find work, at least one-third of them young people, who in the following years were drawn more and more towards the magic orbit of National-Socialist doctrines and became their most valuable helpmates.

Already in his very early years, and long before he began to play an important part in Reich politics, Herr Hitler had tried several times to gain a foothold in Austria. But there he was by far less successful than in Germany. As early as 1920 and 1922 in the Waldviertel region, an Austrian district bordering on Bavaria, propaganda campaigns had been conducted for the "German Workers' Party". The peasants of these regions, however, showed little understanding of the rather nebulous ideas of this new party, and Hitler and his followers had to abandon these projects, at least for the time being.

While the National-Socialist Party was already powerfully

represented in the German Reichstag at a time when Herr Hitler himself had still a long way to go before he became Chancellor, not one single National-Socialist deputy was to be found in the Austrian Parliament even up to its dissolution on March 4, 1933. Their only election successes in Austria were in 1932 when on April 25, in conjunction with the former Pan-German Party at the Vienna municipal elections, they were able to secure 15 seats out of a total of 100. Exactly one year later and already after the assumption of power in Germany, at the Innsbruck municipal elections they were able to muster a total of 15,000 votes and acquired 9 seats. It is to that time that the estimated proportion of their votes, approximately 35 per cent., dates back.

The remaining attempts of the Nazi party before 1933 to arouse public attention met in most cases with a rather lamentable end. On April 13, 1931, the right wing of the Styrian Heimwehr, which actually consisted almost exclusively of National-Socialists, attempted a local *putsch*. It lasted for a single day and the victim was one dead. The leader of this *putsch* was Dr. Pfriemer, a lawyer of Judenburg who to-day represents Austrian National Socialism, as a newly-elected member, in the German Reichstag. Another failure was Dr. Goebbels' unsuccessful attempt, on September 18, to address a mass-meeting in Vienna. On his arrival in the Austrian capital he was received by an audience of just 500 people, and his speech had no effect. Finally a National-Socialist raid on the County Club at Lainz near Vienna should be mentioned. The Rumanian Minister to Vienna and a number of ladies received severe injuries from the Nazi demonstrators. The object which the Nazis pursued with this strange raid has always remained a complete mystery.

Thus Herr Hitler had to realize that Austria was far from being ready to provide a fertile soil for National-Socialist propaganda. But events were to prove that nevertheless nothing could induce him to weaken in his determination not to renounce his claim on Austria. He had established his case, on the opening page of his own book, and he was determined to win it.

Thus Died Austria

On January 30, 1933, he became Chancellor of the German Reich. From this day the entire power of a state of 65 million people was at his disposal: money, troops, diplomacy. And it may safely be assumed that he was determined, from the first hour of his accession, to make use of all these powerful means, and of many others, to curb Austria under his will.

What are the measures, it must now be asked, that can be employed by a State against a neighbouring State, many times smaller, to force it into submission and to give up its independence?

They are the same measures used in private life by the strong man against the weak man to force him to surrender. They are:

Promises	Blackmail
Propaganda	Economic Pressure
Inducement and temptation	Boycott
Bribery	Slander
Warnings	Alarm
Threats	Terrorism, and
	Brute force

Thus the prescription was given. Herr Hitler followed it strictly to the letter. He tried the different medicines not successively but simultaneously. None of them, however, was neglected or overlooked.

The facts which I propose to put forward in the following chapters will give proof.

CHAPTER THREE

Advance Skirmishes

ON JANUARY 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of the German Reich.

On the following evening the Vienna National-Socialists organized a torchlight procession along the Ringstrasse to celebrate the victory of their party in the Reich, and at the same time to proclaim the beginning of a new era of Austrian National-Socialism. The organizers of this torchlight procession were Herr Theo Habicht and Herr Frauenfeld. Habicht, born a Bavarian, was a National-Socialist deputy in the German Reichstag, but nevertheless had been appointed by Herr Hitler personally to the post of Nazi "Inspector-General" for Austria. Frauenfeld, a former bank clerk of the Austrian Bodenkredit-Anstalt, had joined the National-Socialists already for a long time, and for several years had come to be regarded as the actual leader of the Austro-Nazis.

Both these men took the occasion of this first torchlight demonstration to announce the German claim to Austria, and went on to declare that Herr Hitler's success marked the end of Germany's bondage to France. The Austrian Nazis, they said, would declare for the Anschluss, and, simultaneously with the Germans of the Reich, they would march forward and upward to freedom and prosperity. The first step in this direction was to be a general election in Austria which would put their leaders at the head of the State.

These two speeches contained more or less the entire programme of the National-Socialists for Austria, their original plan being to force in Austria, as in Germany, new elections and to obtain so strong a representation in parliament that the Austrian Government—again just as on January 30, 1933, in Germany—would have to admit National-Socialist ministers into the Cabinet who then were gradually to usurp the whole power within the State.

A few days later several new National-Socialist newspapers made their first appearance in Austria. Using invariably a most abusive and unrestrained language against the Government, the Church, and the Jews, they fell under official ban in quick succession, but only to reappear a day or two later under a new name. Among those which were able to acquire certain importance were the *Deutsch-Oesterreichische Tageszeitung* ("German-Austrian Journal") and a midday paper *Der Kampftruf* ("The Battle-Cry"). The vendors of these newspapers were all well-experienced National-Socialist combatants. Wherever meetings were to be called, or "coups" to be organized, these newsvendors acted as extremely efficient despatch riders in quickly informing their customers (and supporters) of the impending events. They were well organized and well trained, and imparted orally information their customers would not find printed in their papers.

At the same time formations of the S.A. (Storm Troops) and S.S. (Black Guards), which then already existed if only in nucleus, were developed, re-organized and enlarged with the aid of ample finances from the Reich. The sums which flowed into Austria from Germany for these purposes were estimated at several million reichsmark a month. They served for the acquisition of brown uniforms and arms, the rent of party premises, and the printing of newspapers and pamphlets. A central office, the so-called "Brown House", was established in the Hirschengasse in the Fourth District of Vienna. Other organizations whose services had been enlisted by the National-Socialists were the 'Verein Suedmark' and the various gymnastic societies and clubs.

The chief objects of the National-Socialists at that period were:

- (a) to attract as much public attention as possible;
- (b) to force the dissolution of parliament and to bring about a general election.

Demonstrations in the streets, torchlight processions and meetings were organized in the greatest possible number, invariably resounding the claim for new elections. It must be



U.S. World Photos.

Herr Frauenfeld.
The two chief leaders of the illegal Austrian National Socialist Party.



U.S. World Photos.

Herr Theo Habicht.

remembered that, at that time, complete freedom of the Press and of meeting still existed in Austria, of which possibilities more than ample use was made by the National-Socialists during a whole month.

The sudden dissolution of the Austrian parliament (National-rat) on March 4, 1933, came as a complete surprise to all sides. The last Austrian parliament had been elected in November 1930. It was composed of 70 Social-Democrats, 66 Christian Socials (Clericals), 21 members of the so-called Schober-block (12 Pan-German and 9 Landbund [Farmer's Party] deputies), and 8 Heimwehr deputies; a total of 165. The Dollfuss Cabinet which was then in office was supported by the Christian Socials, the Heimwehr, and the Landbund deputies, totalling 83, against an opposition of 82 Social-Democrats and Pan-Germans. A railway strike which had broken out in Austria towards the end of February and which lasted until the beginning of March, came before Parliament on March 4. At a vote for or against the punishment of the leaders of the strike eighty deputies came out in support of the Government and eighty-one in opposition. The Government declared that one vote (cast on behalf of a member absent through illness) was illegal. A heated argument followed, in the course of which all three presidents successively resigned from their offices. The session had to be closed, the reopening of parliament being made impossible, at least for the moment, by the fact that it could only be convoked by the president. And president there was none.

Dollfuss made quick use of this new situation, being strongly in favour of a temporary suspension of parliament since, in his view, the increasing propaganda from the Right as well as from the Left could only be countered effectively by emergency decrees, and not through the slow and involved parliamentary machine. Three days after the self-dissolution of parliament, brought about through an obvious error of procedure, he issued his first three emergency decrees. They contained a ban on meetings and greater restrictions in the laws regulating the Press, measures which, had they been put before parliament, would naturally have been prevented from coming into force by such a strong Social-Democratic opposition as existed then.

Five days later another eleven new emergency decrees were

published, causing an equal storm of criticism and indignation among Social-Democrats and National-Socialists. Their meetings, however, were banned, police and detachments of the army preventing their taking place despite the ban; and their newspapers were confiscated and censored. The National-Socialists thereupon called a meeting of their leaders at Linz, and were there informed by Herr Habicht, the Inspector-General, that he had discussed the new situation in Austria with Herr Hitler. Herr Hitler, he said, shared his views and approved of the tactics which the Austrian Nazis proposed to adopt in their opposition against the Government of Dr. Dollfuss, or any other Austrian Government, which did not include members of their organization.

A further consequence of Herr Habicht's conference with Herr Hitler was that the methods employed by the National-Socialists became considerably more severe and ruthless. Being no longer able to hold meetings nor to continue their agitation through their Press, they adopted other means to attract public attention. Wherever opportunity occurred, swastikas were painted on walls and buildings—mostly with tar or some white substance which would not easily wear off—billions of small stamped paper swastikas were strewn in the streets, and on the railway-station building of Kufstein at the frontier between Tyrol and Bavaria a swastika was hoisted, which had to be taken down by the gendarmes. In the mountain regions of the border districts, so-called 'swastika fires' were set ablaze, the wood piled up on the slopes of the mountains to form a gigantic swastika which when burning could be seen for many miles in the valleys.

In his book *Dreimal Oesterreich* (published in England under the title of *Farewell Austria*) Dr. Schuschnigg gives a vivid and accurate description of this particular phase of political struggle.¹ "At first the party symbols appeared discreetly in out-of-the-way places; then on the walls of houses, on doors, on the shutters of shops, advertisement pillars, benches, and pavements, and eventually on milestones, the high-roads, the trees on each side of the main streets; every possible opportunity was taken to greet both native and foreigner day and night with

¹ *Farewell Austria*, by Kurt von Schuschnigg (Cassell), p. 176.

screaming political slogans. Their object, however, was not first and foremost the attainment of power in the country so as to govern it better and more justly; but rather, as was obvious from the nature of the slogans and the political propaganda used in handbills and so forth, the belittlement and repudiation of Austria. Hence, after long and patient warning, the sternest counter-measures were the only possible reply. *Putzscharen* (Cleaning-up Squads) were formed, the function of which was to see that anyone caught flyposting or chalking up slogans should be forced to clean up the signs of their handiwork under police supervision and to pay for the damage done. It transpired that in many cases the actual offenders were youthful unemployed who had been hired for the purpose at a fixed remuneration by the hour. In such cases it was only natural and fair that the real authors of these deeds should be found and made to make amends."

These scrubbing squads mentioned by Schuschnigg were groups of National-Socialists in different villages and communities who, by order and under supervision of the local gendarmes, had to scrub off inscriptions usually put up by themselves under cover of the night. It was entirely due to them that in March and April, 1938, after Herr Hitler's entry into Vienna, Jewish men and women were forced to remove the propaganda inscriptions calling for Dr. Schuschnigg's plebiscite in the streets of Vienna, to clean motor-cars of the S.A. and S.S., and to do similar work, although the parallel must to some extent appear rather far-fetched.

Another means of propaganda at the beginning of 1933 was to tell those who worked for Herr Hitler, either as volunteers or for payment, that the entry of German troops into Austria was to be expected in the very near future. (Payment to unemployed men, as mentioned above, ranged from fifty groschen to one schilling per hour, and for more dangerous purposes, such as bomb-throwing and raids on public buildings, from five to ten schillings.) But supporters of the Government too, chiefly civil servants and officials, were constantly canvassed and persuaded that they would achieve quick promotion if, in view of the impending German invasion, they would pronounce themselves there and then as being in favour of Hitler.

"Let us not dwell on the continually repeated false alarms," Dr. Schuschnigg writes in this connexion, "sounded up and down the country, of a march on Austria and its occupation by the armed Austrian Legion, composed of Austrian refugees in Germany, which was alleged to be going to take place within the next six weeks. Those six weeks had begun in the winter of 1932, and subsequently had to be extended to three months! Nor let us speak of the Legion as such, for which, according to historical models, a regular recruiting campaign had been carried on in Austria: nor of the political murders which took place from time to time, nor the attempted assassinations, the object of which was to spread fear and terror. To give these things at least passing mention and not entirely to bury them in the oblivion that time brings with it, is unavoidable for two considerations; first, because one must know of all this in order to understand the counter-measures which had to be adopted, and secondly, because we can only obtain a true picture of the years that followed, if we know what wounds were inflicted, bear in mind how deep they went, and can gauge the time required for them to heal."¹

Simultaneously street demonstrations of the most violent form began to take place in the streets of Vienna. Tear-gas and stink bombs were thrown into shops and meeting halls, into theatres, cinemas, and concert halls; the windows of the big coffee-houses and shops were smashed, individuals, mostly Jews or workers, were beaten up in the streets, tram-cars and buses were stopped and overturned—in short, nothing was left undone to attract public attention and to spread anxiety, apprehension, and unrest.

It seems evident that already during the first two months after Herr Hitler's assumption of power, the greater part of the list of medicines had been administered.

Other and yet more serious measures were to follow.

On March 21, 1933, Herr Wagner, Nazi Commissarial Minister of the Interior, in addressing a public meeting in Munich, said that if any person offered resistance to the

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 179.

'National Revolution', "such fools and criminals would be extirpated". He warned "forces in Austria against attempting a disturbance of developments in the Reich". The Nazi movement was 'pan-German', and would be able to "re-unite all their German brothers, including those who were dwelling beyond the frontiers of the Reich."

Five years ago the supporters of Herr Hitler used the same language, the very same words which can to-day be heard on every occasion in the speeches of the German statesmen.

Dr. Dollfuss, the Federal Chancellor, in his determination to prevent at all costs the outbreak of an open conflict with the Reich, at first endeavoured through direct negotiations to arrive at a truce with the National-Socialists. Since all acts which have been described above were avowedly initiated by Herr Habicht, Inspector-General and Herr Hitler's Governor in Austria, Dr. Dollfuss in the spring of 1933 tried to come to direct terms with this man. Dr. Schuschnigg, then Minister of Justice, was asked by Dr. Dollfuss to assist him in his negotiations, and he describes them in his book as follows:

"By the spring of 1933, when the Nazi movement began to assume more and more extreme forms, Dollfuss was conscientiously striving in the country's interests to steer his opponents along a more peaceful and steady path. With the Chancellor's approval, Rintelen and Buresch endeavoured to come to verbal arrangements with the Nazi leaders. The Chancellor appointed me to represent him at this discussion. The other side was represented by Theo Habicht and Proksch, and the meeting took place in the Blue Room at the Ministry of Education. I have an exact recollection of this talk, which constituted my first and only meeting with Theo Habicht, the well-known member of the German Reichstag and head of the Austrian Nazis. Herr Proksch was a railway official of Sudeten German origin. Habicht declared that the Austrian National-Socialist Party were prepared, granted certain conditions, to enter into a political coalition with the Christian Socials. A vital obstacle to such a step, however, was constituted by the Heimatschutz, and he insisted upon the latter's exclusion from the Government.

He proposed that the Heimatschutz should be replaced by Nazis up to a number which I have now forgotten. Three or, at most, four ministerial posts were mentioned. The Cabinet would have to hold an early election, the Nazis guaranteeing that, whatever the result, Dollfuss should continue head of the Government. That concession National Socialism was ready to make for reasons of foreign policy."¹

It will be seen that these demands, made by Herr Habicht on the order of Herr Hitler, were almost identical with those which were put before Dr. Schuschnigg by Herr Hitler himself five years later in the course of their historic conversation at the Oberalzberg, on February 12, 1938, and which within just one month led to the final destruction of Austrian independence.

"The conversation," Dr. Schuschnigg continues, "was never resumed. The same thing happened as so often in later years. As soon as ever there seemed a possibility of easing the situation, and settling differences, extreme elements would at the last moment intervene to create an atmosphere calculated to preclude all further negotiation. A particularly glaring example of this procedure occurred at the end of 1933, when Dollfuss declared his readiness to confer with a representative of the Foreign Office in Berlin and to discuss the prospects of a peaceful settlement. The possibility had barely become known when bombs exploded in larger quantities than before along the whole road from Mariazell to Vienna, making any further conversations psychologically impossible, even without the presence on the other side of Herr Habicht, who, after all that had happened, was necessarily regarded in Austria as a very definite obstacle to a friendly issue."

In connexion with these various attempts of the Austrian Government to get down to actual negotiations with Herr Hitler during the years 1933 and 1934, it should be mentioned that in one of these cases Dr. Dollfuss was already on his way flying to Berlin when, above St. Poelten, some sixty kilometres from Vienna, a radio message reached him reporting the outbreak of new particularly ruthless acts of terrorism at the moment of his leaving the capital. Dr. Dollfuss immediately

¹ *Farewell Austria*. p. 107

ordered the pilot to turn back, and half an hour later landed again at Aspern aerodrome.

Immediately after these frustrated efforts to come to terms with Germany through direct negotiations, a sudden unexpected opportunity presented itself to Austria of putting her independence on a firmer basis. Signor Mussolini joined sides with Dr. Dollfuss.

It will perhaps remain an eternal mystery what factors were fundamentally responsible for the strange attachment which the most powerful man in Italy felt for little Dr. Dollfuss. Yet it is an indisputable fact that the Austrian Chancellor found a genuine and close friend in Mussolini. I have known Dr. Dollfuss personally very well, and during our various conversations was well able to apprehend some of the very personal charm which emanated from this man endowed so pitilessly by nature with a ridiculously small stature. A farmer's illegitimate child, Dollfuss had quickly made his way from his humble origin to the height of a brilliant political career. His straightforwardness and his real amiability were the chief factors which helped him to popularity. Tackling every problem with practical common sense, he would go straight ahead towards his aim and was not easily intimidated or induced to modify his decisions. From the first moment of his meeting with Mussolini this tiny man—he was only 4 ft. 11 in. in height—managed to establish a close and heart-to-heart friendship with the big Italian, who in four months invited him three times to be his guest, and twice put his country house at Riccione at his and his family's disposal. This very personal association, from which Austria, if only indirectly, drew considerable benefits, did not however transfer itself to Dr. Schuschnigg, Dollfuss's successor. This failure of two men to understand each other temperamentally lies at the bottom of subsequent developments in their foreign policy during succeeding years. In fact it was responsible for them.

On April 11, 1933, Dollfuss went to Italy. As a convinced Catholic he had made a special point of spending the Holy Week in Rome. This stay provided him with the opportunity

for his first visit to Mussolini, which was followed, in the course of this week, by several additional conversations between the two statesmen. The immediate danger to German aspirations in Austria, should Italy choose to take an active interest in her affairs, was at once perceived in Berlin. Herr von Papen and General Goering were sent hurriedly to Rome by aeroplane and arrived there one day after Dollfuss. But while Dollfuss met with a quite unexpectedly friendly reception at the Palazzo Chigi, the two envoys of Herr Hitler were informed by Signor Mussolini in no unequivocal manner that Italy had not changed her negative attitude towards the question of the Anschluss.

Before leaving Rome a festive banquet was held by Mussolini in the honour of the Austrian Chancellor. By drinking to the "prosperity and future of the Austrian Republic", Mussolini made it evident that he viewed with sympathy Dr. Dollfuss's policy of preserving the independence of Austria, and of steering a middle course between the alternatives, on the one hand of Austrian absorption into the Reich, and on the other of Austria's entering into some form of Danubian confederation on the lines suggested by M. Tardieu.

It was during these first contacts between Dollfuss and Mussolini that the foundations of the Rome Pact were laid.

On his return to Vienna on April 18, Dollfuss was thus able to announce through the official *Politische Korrespondenz* that he had been received most cordially by Signor Mussolini, and that he felt that "Austria possessed in Italy a powerful and understanding friend who could be relied upon to lighten the burden of Austria's cares, and, if need be, to support her in her international negotiations."

The Vienna *Sonn-und Montagszeitung*, whose editor belonged to the circle of Dollfuss's closest confidants, declared on the same day that "Dr. Dollfuss while in Rome also had a conversation with Herr von Papen, the German Vice-Chancellor, whom he gave to understand that Austria would be glad if the Austrian Nazis were no longer to receive suggestions or support from across the frontier. The Chancellor was all the more able to do so having received the impression from his conversations with Signor Mussolini that the course at present pursued by the

Austrian Government met with the fullest approval of Signor Mussolini, who would suffer no external political pressure to be brought to bear on Austria from any quarter."

In a message published on April 21, 1933, under the heading "Italy and Austria: A Hint to Herr von Papen", *The Times* finally declared: "The logical deductions from Signor Mussolini's toast and from Herr Dollfuss's statement on his return to Vienna are borne out by what is being said by well-informed persons concerning the visit of Herr von Papen. According to your correspondent's information, Herr von Papen was given distinctly to understand that the Anschluss was not regarded by Italy as a matter of practical politics."

Herr von Papen was then Vice-Chancellor of the Reich, while Goering enjoyed the political confidence of Herr Hitler, and in this capacity had accompanied him to Rome. For reasons of precedence, however, it was natural that the negotiations with Mussolini had been conducted by the Vice-Chancellor.

The far-reaching changes which European politics were to undergo during the five years that followed, and to no less a degree the amount of success which Dollfuss had been able to reap in Rome, become shatteringly evident in the light of the letters which Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini exchanged on March 11, 1938, the day of the proclamation of the Anschluss.¹

The reply of the Reich to Signor Mussolini's declaration was a still more violent protest of the inevitable necessity of the Anschluss. Two days after Dollfuss's return to Vienna, Herr Rosenberg—then responsible for the conduct of National-Socialist Press policy—declared: "The first stage of the German revolution will only be finished when National-Socialism has become the foundation of the thought of eighty million Germans."

Two weeks later, however, Herr Siebert, National-Socialist Prime Minister of Bavaria, couched the official German attitude towards Austria in somewhat more cautious terms when he declared: "We shall not interfere with the internal affairs of our neighbour State. We shall not tamper in any way with

¹ See page 227 and following.

the integrity of Austria. We can wait until the German people have decided that 'it must be all Germany'."

Thus National-Socialism's first assault had been frustrated. Feeling sure of the support from Rome, the Vienna Government were in a position to take other measures against Germany, and did not lose much time in making use of their opportunity.

On May 4, 1933, a National-Socialist *putsch*, which was to be staged at Kufstein, was disclosed by the *Reichspost*. Thirty thousand Bavarian Nazis in uniform, together with the Austrian units of Northern Tyrol, were to hold a parade at Kufstein. In spite of the general ban on meetings, the Prefect of Kufstein declared that he was ready to make an exception in favour of the Bavarian Nazis. The Government acted without delay. The Prefect of Kufstein was dismissed, the parade was forbidden in the strictest of terms, and strong detachments of troops were despatched to Northern Tyrol to deal with any possible incident.

Official relations between the Government of the Reich and Austria had been up to this time not very cordial, but at least they had been correct. Austrian representations in Berlin regarding Nazi propaganda in Austria had invariably been met with the answer that they were the doings of a party with which the Government of the Reich could not be identified. In the beginning of May, 1933, however, a much more serious conflict began between the two Governments. It was chiefly caused by the fact of Dolfuss's stiffened resistance when he knew he could count on the approval and the support of Italy.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conflict with the Reich Government

ON MAY 9, 1933, the *Reichspost*, Austria's most important Catholic daily (which was then the Government organ), announced that at the invitation of the Austrian Nazis a number of National-Socialist ministers of the Reich were to pay a visit to Vienna on May 14. According to the paper these visitors were to include Dr. Frank, Bavarian Minister of Justice; Herr Kerrl, President of the Prussian Diet; Herr Kube, Prussian Minister of State; and Dr. Freissler, Prussian Secretary of State. They were to arrive in a Government aeroplane at Aspern aerodrome, where they would be welcomed by the Vienna leader of the Nazis. They were to remain in Vienna for several days, take part in a Nazi celebration of the anniversary of the defeat of the Turks in Austria, and address a series of political meetings.

The *Reichspost* added that this visit had been arranged purely for purposes of agitation. For this reason it was "undesirable", "unwelcome", and, in fact, "an unfriendly act".—"It is doubtful," the paper wrote, "whether Dr. Frank, who in a recent broadcast speech threatened a Bavarian invasion of Austria in support of Austrian Nazis, is entitled to travel on Austrian soil. His coming will be a grave strain on the patience and good nature of the Viennese, and he can hardly expect other treatment than that which would be given to an Austrian statesman who visited Germany for the purpose of agitating against the existing régime."

The paper finally warned the German visitors that the Viennese authorities would take all measures necessary to ensure quiet and order during their stay.

On the same afternoon the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, the official Nazi organ in the Reich, rebuked the *Reichspost* in the most violent manner, declaring that "this reveals the irreconcilable hatred of the Austrian Christian Social (Catholic) Party

for the National-Socialists." "We may presume," the paper went on to say, "that the Christian Socialist Ministers in Vienna will not identify themselves with these monstrous insults against German Ministers by their party organ, and will realize in time to what incalculable consequences it would lead if official circles were to give way to this infamous campaign of infamous scribes. The welcome which the Viennese population will give to the National-Socialist Ministers will certainly teach the *Reichspost* that its attitude is indignantly repudiated by the overwhelming majority of the population, and that the Austrian people know full well that the tone adopted by the *Reichspost* only reaps applause in Paris."

The Reich Government, at that period, attached extraordinary importance to the fact that some of its ministers were to pay a personal visit to Austria, since their visit was intended to be only a prelude to a visit at a later period by Herr Hitler, who hoped to achieve a particular propagandist effect with his presence in his native country. It was for this reason that the visit of the ministers had been arranged. It dated back, however, to an invitation extended by Dr. Schuschnigg towards the middle of January, not to Dr. Frank and to his colleagues but to Dr. Guertner, then German Minister of Justice. This is how Dr. Schuschnigg describes the episode himself :¹

"In response to an invitation from the Berlin Law Society I had undertaken to deliver a lecture in Berlin on January 14, 1933, on the unification of the penal code. In connexion with this lecture I visited the Reich Minister of Justice, Dr. Guertner, and was warmly received by him. Lunch was followed by a reception organized by the Minister of Justice and attended by a number of the leading German jurists, including both practising lawyers and scholars, and the most influential parliamentary representatives of the Penal Code Commission in the German Reichstag. Amongst them was the National-Socialist Bavarian Deputy, Dr. Frank, later State and Reich Minister, who, to the best of my recollection, was at that time chairman of the Penal Code Commission in the Reichstag. At this same reception I issued a personal invitation to Dr. Guertner, the

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 163.

Reich Minister of Justice, to express the German point of view on the question of a unified penal code in a lecture before the Viennese jurists, which he accepted with the remark that he had in any case long been intending to pay a visit to Vienna.

"I mention this incident because subsequently Dr. Frank referred to this conversation in Berlin when writing as Bavarian Minister of State to inform me, as Austrian Minister of Justice, of his visit to Vienna on the invitation of the Vienna District Leadership of the Austrian National-Socialist Party, a visit which, as is well known, led to such disagreeable and regrettable consequences."

What the Reich Government should have been able to gather from the attitude of the *Reichspost* and from the negative answer which Dr. Frank received from Dr. Schuschnigg in connexion with his intended visit, was made perfectly clear in the following official *communiqué* issued by the Austrian Government two days before the planned visit: "On the arrival of the German National-Socialist ministers in Vienna on Saturday (as guests of the Austrian Nazis), twenty members only of the Austrian National-Socialist Party will be permitted to greet their comrades in the aerodrome. The public will not be allowed to line the streets through which the visitors will pass, and demonstrations, either friendly or hostile, will be prevented. The only public meeting to be allowed during the visit will be in the Engelmann Arena (Vienna's second largest ice-rink), where the German ministers will be given the opportunity to speak on some non-political subject. Appropriate measures will be taken by the authorities to prevent disorder. The visit has not been officially notified to the Austrian Government, and the visitors will be treated as private individuals."

The German ministers arrived according to schedule on Saturday afternoon at Aspern aerodrome, where they were greeted by Herr Frauenfeld and Herr Proksch in the name of the Austrian Nazis, twelve other well-known Austrian National-Socialists, the German Minister to Vienna, and the staff of the Legation. At the moment the German visitors were to enter their cars to drive into the city, Dr. Skubl, then vice-president of the Viennese police, in the name of the Austrian Government approached Dr. Frank and declared that the Austrian

Government had asked him to say that in consideration of the fact that the settlement of a certain matter was still pending (referring to the threat against Austria uttered by Dr. Frank in a speech of his recently broadcast from Munich) his visit in Austria was not considered very desirable. He added that nevertheless everything had been done to ensure the Minister's personal safety.

Dr. Frank replied by asking the emissary to inform his Government that he was "grateful for their courteous welcome."

Dr. Skubl's announcement aroused deepest resentment in Nazi circles, increased by the fact that the German visitors' cars were not permitted to pass through the main thoroughfares where numerous Nazis had already gathered in order to demonstrate, but were conducted into the city through side-streets. When he made his announced speech in the evening, Dr. Frank was not allowed to touch upon any political subject but only to dwell on the liberation of Vienna from the Turks. He did not, however, refrain from remarking that the Heimwehr were the actual present Turkish enemies of Austria. In addition he conveyed warmest personal greetings from Herr Hitler, whose visit to Austria he announced for the near future.

On the ground of these remarks Dr. Frank was not permitted to make further speeches in Vienna, and he left the following day for Graz. There too the Bavarian Minister was received by a representative of the Austrian Government, who politely but distinctly indicated that the Minister would not be permitted to speak in a public meeting. But Dr. Frank found another opportunity for taunting the Austrian Government. In an after-dinner speech to a Nazi gathering he declared that his visit was intended not for the Government but for the people of Austria. He would make a full report on the incidents in Vienna to Herr Hitler, who would come to Austria himself in the immediate future. (Actually Herr Hitler arrived in Vienna only five years later, on March 12, 1938, but then at the head of a whole division of the German army.) In the meantime he had told the German Legation in Vienna that the Reich Government did not intend to put up with the affront offered to it and to Herr Hitler by the behaviour of the Austrian Government to himself, but would order fitting reprisals. Ger-

mans of the Reich would keep away from Austria until satisfaction was given. The time would come when the Germans of Austria would be united, proud, and free.

Simultaneously the National-Socialist Press in Berlin announced that a boycott of Austria by German tourists and visitors would be organized. On the same day the Reich Government, through their Minister in Vienna, lodged a strong protest with the Austrian Government in respect of its attitude towards the German Ministers who had visited Vienna during the weekend. On the other hand it was officially announced in Vienna that the Austrian Minister in Berlin, Herr Tauschitz, had been instructed to convey to Baron Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, a protest against the affront to the Austrian Government, of which Dr. Frank was guilty in utterances at Graz. Herr Tauschitz requested the German Foreign Minister to take the necessary steps to ensure that Dr. Frank left Austria as soon as possible, as otherwise the Austrian Government would be compelled to expel him.

Thereupon Dr. Frank left Graz the next day, taking however neither aeroplane nor railway, but driving by car to Salzburg, in order to be able to establish contacts, on his way, with the various Nazi leaders of Upper Styria and Upper Austria. When he reached Salzburg on his motor journey, he was met at the town boundary by a police officer, who informed him in the name of the Federal Government that he was desired to leave Austrian territory as soon as possible. Nevertheless Dr. Frank drove into the town, where a crowd of Nazis and onlookers had gathered in front of the Nazi headquarters. The Nazis greeted him with the German national anthem and the "Horst Wessel" song. A large body of police was mustered to keep the crowd under control. Dr. Frank and the Nazi leaders, after being reminded that public speeches were forbidden in Austria, withdrew to a hotel, and two hours later Dr. Frank crossed the border.

The visit of the German Ministers and the announcement of Herr Hitler's impending journey to Austria confronted the Austrian Government with the necessity of renewed resistance. Herr Hitler's visit was to take place in June, at a time when

Dr. Dollfuss would be in Rome to sign the Concordat. Herr Hitler could thus be on Austrian territory without having to meet the Austrian Chancellor. But on the other hand, shortly before the visit of Dr. Frank, the Austrian Government had been given to understand by the Reich Government that they desired Herr Hitler's visit to Vienna to be prepared officially and through diplomatic channels.

The threat uttered by Dr. Frank at Graz that Germany would no longer permit her citizens to travel in Austria was made a fact only a few days later. Five days after Dr. Frank had left, the Bavarian Minister, Dr. Esser, declared in Munich that what had recently happened in connexion with the expulsion of Germans from Austria was so unheard of that he could not talk about it in the presence of representatives of foreign countries. "When the Austrians say that they can dispense with visits from Germany, when they say that they do not wish to see a brown shirt, then you will understand why the Government is taking the necessary steps. We have applied for measures to be adopted in order to divert the stream of German tourists away from Austria, a country where Germans to-day are not regarded as equals. We are sorry for Austria, but we know that such measures would do no injury to Bavaria, and might even on the contrary have a salutary effect."

The ban on German tourists going to Austria, officially issued three days later, sprang thus not only from the desire to inflict severe harm on the Austrian tourist traffic, and thereby on the whole of Austrian economic life, but also from Germany's wish to prevent, for reasons of currency policy, German citizens from travelling too much abroad. German tourist traffic to Austria had always been particularly heavy, and the Reich Government were thus able, with one measure of reprisal, to kill two birds with one stone.

On May 27, 1933, the famous decree known as the "Thousand-Marks Ban" was promulgated, and came into force on June 1, 1933. It was couched into the following terms:

"The emergency measures taken by the Austrian Government against the National-Socialist movement in Austria, forbidding the uniforms, flags, signs, and other emblems of the movement, have called attention to the danger that German

National-Socialists, staying as guests in Austria and ignorant of these regulations, may come into conflict with the Austrian authorities, the result of which would disturb the friendly relations between Germany and Austria. In an endeavour to protect German travellers from unpleasant incidents, and to avoid anything which might cause a disturbance in the relations of the German Government with that of Austria, the Minister of the Interior will issue an order in connexion with tourist traffic to Austria to the effect that from June 1, 1933, Germans may only travel to Austria if possessed of a special visa which will be supplied on payment of 1000 marks. Exceptions will be made only in the case of regular business traffic under the terms of the customs regulations; excursionists will not be exempt."

I quote the decree *in toto* in order to point out the gross inaccuracies which it contained. Not one single case is known in which the Austrian authorities, either at that time or later on, objected to German citizens wearing German emblems in Austria; and during the five years' struggle for Austria not one single instance has occurred of German citizens being interfered with or put to any inconvenience while in Austria, with the exception of 'Inspector-General' Habicht, who, however, had to be regarded as the leader of the Austrian Nazis.

What must rightly be called the hypocrisy and sheer mendacity underlying this declaration becomes still more evident in the light of a declaration made by the Austrian National-Socialists and published in Berlin on the same day which states "that the detached observer had for weeks foreseen this measure as an inevitable result of the Austrian Government's attitude to Germany and to National-Socialism." The declaration further points out that 22 per cent. of the tourist traffic in Austria is German (and, in the Alpine districts, as much as 72 per cent.), and concludes by asking whether Austrian trade is to be ruined and Austria to perish "in order that the Dollfuss Cabinet may continue in office."

The "Thousand-Marks Ban" was supplemented, two days later, by a number of additional regulations. "The 1000-marks special visa required by German nationals for passing into Austria is to apply equally in the case of travellers passing through Austria to some other destination. Germans attempting to enter

Austria by a roundabout route without the visa are liable to a term of imprisonment or to a fine of not less than 5000 marks. [Since the difficulties of tracing offenders entering Austria through a third country are obvious, this clause was presumably intended merely as an intimidation.] Railway, postal, and Customs officials, travellers bound for Austria in the course of fulfilling contracts, and students already matriculated in an Austrian university will be exempt from the tax. In other cases the necessity of the journey must be proved to the satisfaction of the authorities."

To all practical purposes the Thousand-Marks Ban was tantamount to a complete ban on all tourist traffic. From the very beginning, and throughout the following three years, the German authorities supplied visas exclusively to persons travelling on business and for the propaganda purposes of the National-Socialist Party. At one stroke the great stream of German tourists to Austria, formerly very heavy indeed, had been stopped from flowing.

The Austrian Government, however, refused to be intimidated by this act of blackmail—for there is hardly any other appropriate word for it. Particularly in England it is well known that increased efforts were made in Vienna to make up for the loss of the German visitors by inviting tourists from the Western countries to come to Austria. These efforts were rewarded with a full measure of success, and the Thousand-Marks Ban was partly abolished in the autumn of 1936, as the German Government were forced to realize that, if only for reasons of protest, British, French, American, and Dutch visitors and tourists had more than compensated Austria for the loss of the much less munificent Germans.

But the Federal Government had to put up with still other forms of economic pressure. In his book Dr. Schuschnigg enumerates various of these: the economic boycott, repeated attempts to create nervousness among the Austrian population by disseminating disquieting rumours, such as the impending issue of a forced loan, the intended seizure of the post office savings by the State, etc., propaganda in favour of a smoker's

strike, a taxpayer's strike, and a boycott of public institutions, and so forth.

Attempts to interfere with the economic life of the Austrian nation began in 1933, on the occasion of the issue of the Austrian *Treffer-Anleihe* of 1933. The purpose of this loan was, by utilizing productive investments, to create new fields of employment for the Austrian unemployed, a purpose disliked by the Nazis for a twofold reason. First, as a constructive measure, it deprived them of their claim that the Dollfuss Cabinet remained idle and inactive in the most urgent national emergencies. Secondly, the National-Socialists were not interested in an appeasement of the unemployed. Therefore rumours were spread with the help of handbills and mouth-to-mouth propaganda to the effect that the loan could not possibly be fully subscribed by voluntary contributions, and that the Government intended to conscript a certain proportion of all private savings for this purpose. The Government, however, were able to meet these rumours with a clear statement of their real intentions, with the result that the loan was heavily over-subscribed.

The so-called smoker's strike—which lasted, with certain intervals, for almost three years—was ridiculously ineffective. Since tobacco manufactures in Austria were in the hands exclusively of the State tobacco monopoly, and the receipts from this monopoly (which yielded yearly approximately ten million pounds) constituted a capital item in the State receipts, the National-Socialists hoped to inflict particularly severe damage on the State by proclaiming a "smoker's strike". As, however, only very few people were actually prepared to give up smoking altogether, only a comparatively small proportion of National-Socialist supporters complied with the strike order. Yet visitors to Austrian country and village inns sometimes actually came across some staunch Nazis smoking pipes filled with all kinds of 'substitutes', the smell of which burning could only have been chosen to make sensible their disagreement with the Austrian State.

The taxpayers' strike was broken by swift and effective measures against all forms of tax evasion, high interest rates being charged on wilfully belated tax payments. But it never gained any serious proportions, for the simple reason that the greater part of the militant National-Socialist supporters were youths

and unemployed. Business men and industrialists who were in sympathy with the Nazi party took good care not to take part in any economic measures against the State, knowing that thereby they would only cook their own geese.

The Reich Government, at the same time, did everything within their power to make the economic situation of Austria increasingly difficult. Shortly before Herr Hitler's assumption of power (in January 1933) negotiations had been begun for a new trade agreement between Germany and Austria with the purpose of widening the scope of Austrian exports to Germany. It had been the intention to resume these negotiations in March 1933; but they were postponed again and again by the Reich Government, any larger trade agreement between the two countries being thus prevented from coming into existence during the next five years. The position being, however, that the Reich depended to a much larger extent upon imports from Austria than Austria upon German products, the truly grotesque situation developed of Germany increasing from year to year her imports of Austrian milk and dairy produce, pedigree cattle, timber, ores, and other goods, while the German industries, on account of their increasing shortage of raw materials, were able to offer less and less to their Austrian customers. This development culminated (in January 1938) in Austria's presenting a balance-sheet with more than sixty million schillings of immobile debts outstanding from Germany, forcing Germany thus to cut down her imports from Austria by 40 per cent. in order to arrive at a gradual readjustment of the clearing.

This astonishing situation took its time, however, to develop. During the spring of 1933 Berlin had still cherished the hope that the introduction of the Thousand-Marks Ban would bring about the breakdown of Austrian trade and finance. Yet again Austria was ready to give Germany a thoroughly unexpected answer. Negotiating with Rome and Budapest, Dr. Dollfuss laid the foundations for the economically and politically very important Rome Protocols.

Terrorism and Bombs

ON JUNE 2, 1933, Dollfuss and Schuschnigg flew to Rome to sign the Concordat with the Vatican and to conclude a number of new agreements with Signor Mussolini.

On the same day National-Socialist terrorism began in Austria. From then on, and for one whole year until the breakdown of the Nazi *putsch* in July 1934, hardly a day went by without the shedding of blood. Significantly enough, the days of Dollfuss's absence were chosen by the National-Socialists for the performance of their most ruthless acts of terrorism. Particularly during the period from June 2 to June 20, 1933, when Dollfuss was in Rome and London, terrorism reached proportions little short of an outbreak of elementary forces.

A great number of so-called "paper bombs" which were thrown not only in Vienna but in almost all the larger towns of the Federal provinces, formed the prelude to bigger happenings. These paper bombs were like real bombs in construction, but made of cardboard instead of metal and filled with light explosive instead of dynamite. Consequently they were only able to cause comparatively little damage. They left a small crater in the pavement or wherever else they were dropped, windows were smashed in the immediate neighbourhood; people close to the explosion more often than not received injuries, but only in a few cases were there any killed. The raiders, mostly unemployed who were paid a fixed fee for each raid, used to drop their bombs on the ground or throw them into shop-windows and run away. The explosion itself would occur a few moments later with a loud detonation; people would either hastily withdraw or throw themselves to the ground in order to escape injury. Not seldom, however, these paper bombs were thrown into coffee-houses, particularly those frequented mainly by Jews, and in these cases occasionally people were killed and severely injured. They exploded in all

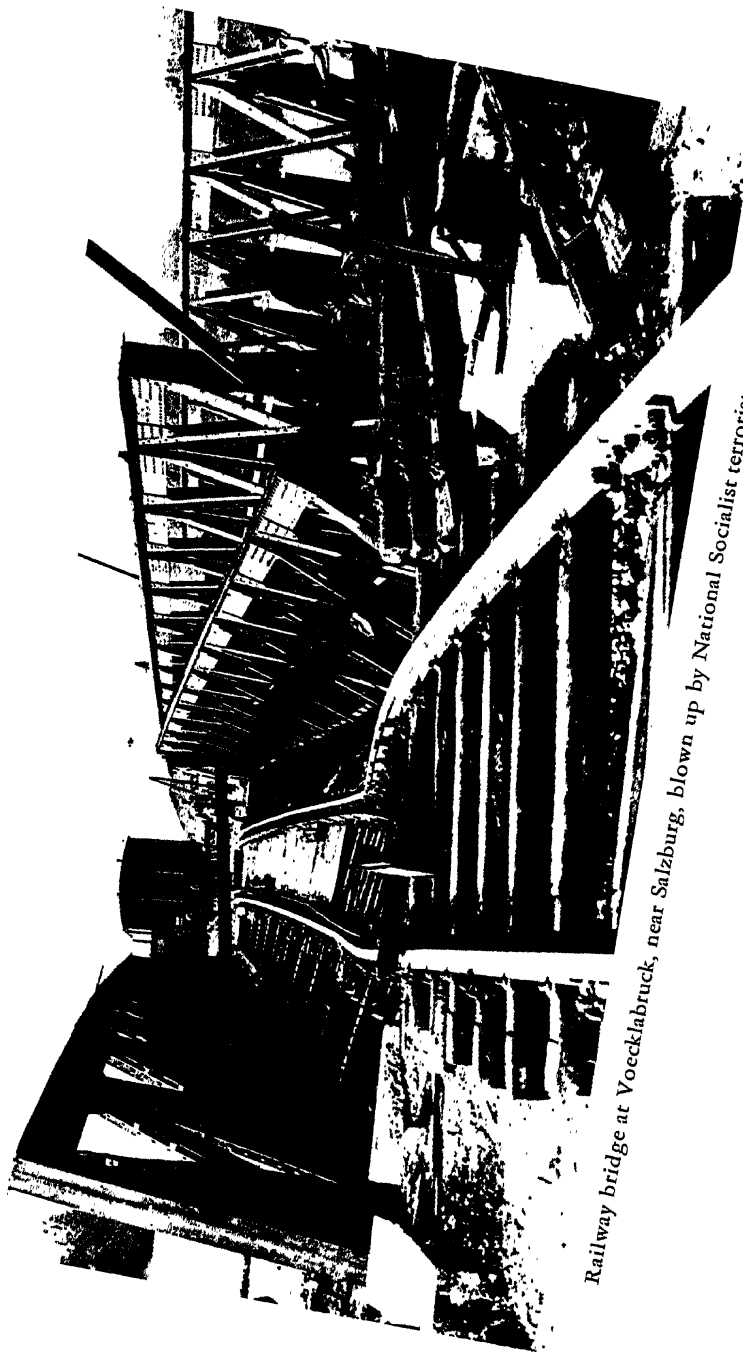
parts of the town, though mainly in the Inner City, but the workers' districts of Favoriten, Schoenbrunn, and the outskirts of the town were not spared.

The police immediately took strong measures. Houses were searched, revealing considerable quantities of stored explosive material, the wearing of brown shirts and caps was forbidden, numerous arrests were made, and police patrols and sentries doubled. In order not to exhaust the available contingents of police troops, a special auxiliary police corps was created in which members of the Christian Social organizations, the Heimwehr and the Agrarian party (Landbund) could enlist.

It took the population of Vienna only a few days to become used to paper bombs, just as one would "get used" to artillery fire and air-raids during the Great War. I was witness myself to several of these paper-bomb explosions during those days, and it was surprising how quickly one learned completely to underestimate the actual danger. The first raid I witnessed occurred at the Liebenberg monument, opposite the University. Beyond a hole in the pavement and two broken windows nothing actually happened, yet the first impression of the explosion was terrific. My second experience was at the Braunschweiggasse suburban railway station, in the suburb of Hietzing, where only the signalling apparatus was destroyed! The impression had now become rather less overwhelming; one had become used to this kind of thing. The third time was at the Café Victoria. There was the usual detonation and the splintering of glass. "Only a paper bomb", we reassured ourselves. Yet a lady just near us was killed, the bomb having exploded directly underneath her table.

The National-Socialists, whose only aim it was to spread anxiety and terror among the people, considered it an insult to their activities that the population should have "got used to it". Therefore the central party leadership in Austria, at the head of which still stood the German Reichstag deputy, Herr Habicht, as Inspector-General, ordered stronger measures.

The first attempted murder took place on June 11, 1933, the day Dr. Dollfuss had left Vienna for London, where he was to take part in the World Economic Conference. On this evening, a motor-car with dimmed head-lights waited for several hours in



Railway bridge at Voecklabruck, near Salzburg, blown up by National Socialist terrorists on June 6, 1934.

Ufa World Photos.

front of the Government building at Innsbruck, until Dr. Steidle, the Provincial Governor of Tyrol and regional leader of the Heimwehr, left his office. A shower of quick-fired bullets greeted him from the motor-car; he instantly fell, seriously wounded, and the car dashed off towards the Bavarian frontier near by. That same night an attempt to murder an auxiliary police constable was made at Kufstein, on the border of Tyrol and Bavaria.

The next morning at Meidling, Vienna, a large bomb was thrown into the shop of Herr Futterweit, a jeweller, a man who had never taken part in any politics, but who was a Jew. The jeweller and another person were killed. Shortly afterwards I accidentally made the acquaintance of the widow of the murdered man. By the account she gave me her husband was in his shop when a motor-cyclist pulled up outside and shouted something to him. He went out towards him, when the driver threw a brown paper parcel in his direction, which he caught. From the parcel some mysterious smoke emanated, and the ticking of a clock could be heard inside it; but evidently before Herr Futterweit had been able to make up his mind where to throw the parcel, it exploded and virtually blew him to bits. He had been about to step out into the street and to throw the parcel on the pavement; these few steps saved his wife's life, but two passers-by were severely injured and one killed.

The bomb evidently had become distinctly more dangerous.

On the same night extensive precautionary measures were taken by the police in all parts of the country. All 'Brown Houses' throughout Vienna, numbering 170, were surrounded by police and troops, occupied, and searched. The same measures were taken in the other Federal provinces. Invariably great quantities of arms and ammunition, explosives and bombs of varying kinds and forms, and considerable propaganda material were found and seized. In one single smithy at Gerbach near Innsbruck the police discovered 200 bombs loaded with iron slugs and of great destructive power. Their makers could be traced and arrested.

Shortly afterwards the police were able to lay their hands on one of the men who had taken part in the attempt against Dr. Steidle the Governor of Tyrol—Werner von Alvensleben,

a twenty-year-old German, whom they arrested in a Vienna wine-house. The police stated that with his accomplice von Alvensleben had rented a bathing cabin at Kritzendorf on the Danube. In the cabin, inside a locked trunk, were, according to the police statement, two revolvers, ammunition, and a Heimwehr cap. Von Alvensleben told his interrogators that by wearing the cap he had twice been able to enter and reconnoitre the house of Major Fey. (Fey, at that time, was generally regarded among National-Socialists as well as Social-Democrats as the "Black Man" who with the help of his Heimwehr battalions kept all other armed formations suppressed.) It was only for lack of opportunity, Alvensleben was alleged to have said, that he had not already made an attempt on Major Fey's life, and but for his arrest he would have made it in a few days. Dr. Steidle, he said, was next on the list. If their attempts to murder prominent Heimwehr leaders had failed, he and his accomplice would have been ready to commit a sequence of bomb outrages.

On this occasion the existence of an arms dépôt at a bathing-place on the Danube was made known for the first time. The authorities had for a long time been puzzled how these enormous quantities of ammunition and explosives could have reached the Austrian National-Socialists without the police having been able to lay their hands on any substantial quantities of them. Even at a later date the public were never told in detail about these German arms transports in order to prevent unnecessary anxiety. Accidentally, one afternoon while swimming in the Danube, I learned the secret. In the middle of the river I noticed a small green float which appeared to be attached to a string. Back on the shore I asked the attendant what was the meaning of these small coloured things. The man thereupon became very excited indeed, asked for exact details where the float had been seen, and then declared he would have to inform the gendarmes at once. I was astonished at his excitement, and asked what the gendarmes had got to do with it. But he refused to answer. Later when I asked the police constable himself I learned that frequently these floats were connected through a string or wire with large tin caskets, soldered up and completely water-tight, which contained arms, ammunition, explo-

sives, propaganda material, hand grenades, instructions for the manufacture of bombs and infernal machines, tear-gas, and other things. Since there is a heavy traffic on the Danube, particularly during the summer months, of craft of all Central European nationalities, it was easy enough to let the soldered caskets slip into the water at specially designated places. Next morning the coloured floats would indicate to the interested parties where the caskets, which had been dumped into the water mostly under the cover of the night, could be found.

The banks of the Danube and their neighbourhood were then actually strongholds of National-Socialist propaganda during the whole time this struggle lasted. Long stretches of the Danube shores from Engelhartzell up to Linz in Upper Austria, as well as the regions of Strudengau and Wachau, had always been particularly infested with German National-Socialist propaganda. The public explanation of this feature had always been that the passengers of the German tourist steamers had necessarily mixed with the population on the shores and carried on an extensive propaganda amongst them.

National-Socialist bomb outrages became distinctly more violent towards the middle of June 1933, there seeming to be no danger of the stores of arms, ammunition and explosives exhausting themselves.

In the six days from June 13 to June 18 a series of new bomb outrages and acts of sabotage were committed throughout the country. At the Café Produktenboerse in Vienna two bombs were found just in time to prevent them from exploding. Murder was attempted against a Vienna Heimwehr man. Several shops in Vienna and in the surrounding districts suffered from bomb raids, the long-distance telephone cable from Vienna to Graz was cut near the Semmering, several bomb outrages were committed at Aflenz in Styria and at Leoben, armed incidents occurred, railway lines were blown up and destroyed in different parts of the country, and frontier guards in the Tyrol and Vorarlberg were shot at.

On June 19, 1933, a detachment of auxiliary police were on their march home from exercises at Rehberg near Krems when they were ambushed and two hand grenades were thrown at

them. One Heimwehr man was instantly killed, and thirty auxiliary police severely wounded. The assailant, a Nazi from Krems, was arrested. He confessed to having received the hand grenades from his brother, a soldier, who had stolen them from the army depots.

On the same day an attempt to wreck the Klammm power works at Salzburg was disclosed. Raiders who had broken into the machine-house had tried to open the big reservoirs and to release a mass of 100 million cubic feet of water, which was to inundate the neighbourhood completely. Having no technical knowledge, however, they had only been able to do considerable damage to the machinery without opening the sluices. An inconceivable catastrophe had been averted.

When news was received of these two latest outrages the Government decided to dissolve the National-Socialist party. Dr. Schuschnigg, then Minister of Justice, was charged by Chancellor Dollfuss on the eve of June 19, 1933, to announce the Government's decision on the wireless. He describes the measures taken as follows:

"In June 1933 at Krems some German Christian gymnasts were marching along innocently when they were attacked from the rear with hand grenades. As a result one man was killed and several severely wounded; whereupon the Austrian National-Socialist party was forbidden to engage in any form of activity. It should be remarked that at that time this party depended, economically and in the persons of their leaders, on forces which were not native in Austria. The most powerful influence in the party was wielded by the growing number of political *émigrés*—for the most part people who had lost their Austrian nationality; for anyone in Austria who had infringed the law and had fled to escape the consequences was deprived of civic rights. In addition, there were however here and there all over Austria district leaders and inspectors who likewise could not claim Austrian nationality, so that National-Socialism in Austria had actually for long ceased more and more to have the character of an internal Austrian and internal political movement."¹

Simultaneously the entire National-Socialist party Press was

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 180.

banned, the 'Brown Houses' closed, the wearing of the swastika, and saluting in the Hitler fashion forbidden.

Several days earlier the Austrian Government had resorted to a measure which seemed particularly fitted to do away at least with the most violent acts of terrorism in the future: the central office of the National-Socialists at Linz was searched by the authorities. Herr Habicht and several other National-Socialists from the Reich had barricaded themselves in a villa which could only be occupied after the Linz police had threatened to use force. In the absence of Dr. Dollfuss, who was away in London, the then Vice-Chancellor issued an official *communiqué* in which he announced, in the name of the Government, the following:

"The events of the last two days give the impression that, under powerful influence from the Reich-German National-Socialists, the Austrian Hitler party has resolved to leave the path of legal activity and to launch a systematic campaign of illegal terrorism. The Government have long been aware of these designs, and have made extensive preparations for breaking the terrorism whenever and wherever it occurs. Everyone may rest assured that these deeply ramified attempts to alarm the population and to poison the political atmosphere even more, will meet with the sharpest possible resistance from the Government."

On the same day in London Dr. Dollfuss received representatives of the British Press, to whom he made the following declaration:

"We Austrians deeply regret that our relations with our great neighbour, Germany, to whom we are bound by ties of common language, history and cultural development, have recently been disturbed by a few incidents. We sincerely trust that in the mutual interests of both countries we shall very soon be able to re-establish the former good and friendly relations. We are fighting to-day for the preservation of Austria as an independent political and economic body in Central Europe, and we believe that by steadfastly adhering to this supreme objective of our endeavours we are making an important contribution to the maintenance of peace in Europe."

Finally, and still on the same day, the Reich Government

lodged a particularly strong protest in Vienna against the arrest of Herr Habicht, who, it was pretended, had been accredited as Press Attaché to the German Legation in Vienna and therefore enjoyed extra-territorial rights, in spite of the fact that the Austrian Government had refused, in the most precise of terms, to recognize them. In contrast with the peaceful hand which had once again and this time through the hospitality of British newspapers, been stretched out to the Germans by Dollfuss, the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, and with it the greater part of the German National-Socialist Press, wrote that evening:

"Regarded historically, these brutal struggles of the still dominant system are relics of a policy which prevailed mischievously for decades before the War at the Vienna Hofburg, and did not allow German interests to count at all, so that the biographer of the Emperor Charles could write triumphantly that the Emperor Francis Joseph had not drawn his sword for German interests, but only for the interests of his State of many peoples.

"Backed by French political pressure, Jewish money power, and Marxist international propaganda, the so-called Christian Social Party has allied itself against greater Germany, against the German idea itself. We are, however, confident that in spite of everything the German character in its ardent awakening will also win through in Austria, and the day of internal liberation from the corrupt system will come for our Austrian brethren."

And, still on that same night, the Press Attaché to the Austrian Legation in Berlin (Dr. Wasserbaeck), who had been explicitly granted full diplomatic status by the Reich Government, was arrested in his flat at night at the order of General Goering. Although the police were forced the next day by the intervention of the Foreign Office to release Dr. Wasserbaeck—since his arrest constituted a most flagrant violation of all existing treaties—General Goering had been able, if only for a few hours, to prove his might by retorting to the arrest of Herr Habicht with so strong a 'reprisal' as the arrest of an official Austrian diplomat.

In a leading article published on June 15, 1933, on the arrest of Dr. Wasserbaeck, *The Times* left no doubt about the actual

legal position. "This outrage of arrest and attempted expulsion of a foreigner of diplomatic standing [*The Times* wrote] was committed as a so-called reprisal for the arrest of the German Nazi leader, Herr Habicht, in Austria. But these two cases stand on completely different ground. Herr Habicht is a Reichstag deputy—though habitually domiciled in Austria—who was accorded by the German Government the title of 'Nazi State Inspector for Austria'. He was in fact appointed to a public position in a foreign country. This cool impertinence drew a protest from the Austrian Government, whereupon the Nazi Deputy and proselytizer was appointed Press Attaché to the German Legation in Vienna. The obviously nominal and misleading character of this appointment fully justified the Austrian refusal to grant diplomatic immunities to the intruder—rights which, of course, may in any case be withheld from any personage by the Government to whom it is proposed that he should be accredited. In this case the Austrian Government regarded Herr Habicht as an interloper; and when a whole series of outrages were committed by those whose activities he was supposed to 'inspect' he was very properly arrested."

Herr Habicht immediately upon his arrest went on a hunger strike; he was released the next day and escorted across the Bavarian frontier. During the following years he did not re-enter Austrian territory. His voice, however, was to be heard all the more clearly in Austria during the so-called "War in the Air" which was soon to break out.

Dr. Wasserbaeck too was released the following morning. He was ordered to leave German territory at once, and was transferred successively to the Austrian Legations in London and in Paris.

The arrest of Dr. Wasserbaeck and the acts of wild terrorism which occurred during Dr. Dollfuss's stay in England aroused warm and widespread sympathy for the Austrian Chancellor in Great Britain. He received wholehearted support in all his endeavours, and his negotiations were crowned with full success. The sympathy extended to Dollfuss in England was deeply resented by the German and Austrian National-Socialists. The ways in which it was attempted to belittle and diminish his

obvious successes in the eyes of the German public and the Austrian National-Socialists, become strikingly apparent from the following confrontation :

Leading article in "The Times" of June 15, 1933, under the headline :

AUSTRO-GERMAN TENSION

The prolonged and general applause with which Dr. Dollfuss was greeted yesterday morning, when he rose to speak in the conference, was a measure of the sympathy and admiration felt for this small and gallant statesman in his struggle to preserve the political independence of his country. He devoted the chief part of his speech to some sensible observations on the need for each State to set its own finances in order, as well as to increase the facilities for international exchange. On the subject which must have been uppermost in his mind he confined himself to a single, though most telling and apposite quotation. He chose it from the Great German national poet Schiller: "Es kann der Beste nicht in Frieden leben, wenn es dem bösen Nachbar nicht gefällt"; and the allusion to the 'wicked neighbour'— "le voisin malfaisant" as the interpreter put it—caused something like a stir in the assembly. Its appropriateness cannot be questioned. Certainly the best country in the world cannot live in peace if its wicked neighbour chooses

Message from their London Correspondent, published by the Vienna National-Socialist paper "Kampfruf" on June 16, 1933, under the headline :

THE TRUTH ABOUT LONDON: BRITAIN FOR NAZI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT

Though there has been no lack of honeved words about Austria in the British press, this is partly accounted for by the Jewish ownership of leading journals. In any case Great Britain is too wrapped up in her own world-wide worries to have the time or the wish to interest herself in the domestic troubles of little Austria. It is a matter of complete indifference to her who governs there so long as order is maintained, the whole of the British sympathy for Austria being dictated by anxiety for undisturbed enjoyment of dividends. London would have nothing against National-Socialist participation in the Government. Between the lines of the friendly articles published in London in politeness to a foreign guest could be read admission of the fact that Herr Dollfuss has not got his people behind him. Most British newspapers are convinced that Germany will triumph because the Nazi

not to allow it; and the country which of all in Central Europe has hitherto been the least bellicose is now putting up a spirited fight against the overbearing behaviour and intimidation of Germany . . . movement is already too strong to be defeated.

I have chosen purposely from British Press comments of that day only *The Times*, which certainly cannot be accused of being under "Jewish influence." The other papers commented no less warmly on Dollfuss but with much more outspoken feeling against the aspirations of Germany. Finally, if only as an outward sign of the success obtained by the Austrian Government, Dr. Dollfuss was able to take with him to Vienna the definite promise of the British Government to grant Austria the necessary help by taking a large share in the forthcoming Lausanne loan.

The bomb outrage at Krems and the attempted sabotage at the Klamms power-station were followed by swift action on the part of the police, resulting in the arrest of more than 1200 National-Socialists. According to an official *communiqué* they included 387 Federal officials and Government clerks, 47 town councillors, 81 burgomasters, 111 communal councillors, 214 local government officials, 37 gendarmes, 21 soldiers, 3 public prosecutors, 7 judges, 14 excise men, 8 retired staff officers, 52 school teachers, 37 lawyers, and 61 railway officials. Fifteen German Nazi agents were deported from Vienna on June 15, 1933. Among those previously deported, besides Herr Habicht, were Herr Bigler, commander of the Austrian S.S. (Black Guards) and Herr Habicht's personal staff from Linz.

These energetic measures helped to produce a certain appeasement of the atmosphere during the following month. For the sake of completeness, however, a list including only major acts of terrorism committed in Austria until the end of 1933 is given below, which will round off the picture.

JUNE 20. Destruction of twenty public telephone booths in Vienna. Railway bridge near Rodaun (Lower Austria) blown up.

JUNE 21. Attempted incendiarism at a variety hall in the Vienna Prater.

Bomb outrage in the Eszterhazy Park, Vienna.

JUNE 22. Declaration made in Munich by Herr Wagner, Bavarian Minister of the Interior: "Herr Hitler identifies himself absolutely with his leading men both in Germany and in Austria. I am also authorized to declare that the revolution will be carried further. It will continue its course until every force which does not unite with it is eliminated."

JUNE 23. Hydrochloric acid poured into numerous letter-boxes in Vienna.

JUNE 24. Bomb outrages at Salzburg, Gmunden, and Oberwoelz.

JUNE 25. Herr Frauenfeld arrested at the frontier while trying to escape into Italy.

JUNE 25. Bomb outrages on the Vienna north-west railway bridge, the Vienna-Baden electric railway, the Vienna metropolitan railway.

Discovery of bombs in front of the town hall at Kufstein (Tyrol).

JUNE 27. Graz-Budapest long-distance telegraph cable and other telegraph lines destroyed in the Burgenland.

JUNE 28. Three bomb outrages in Vienna (paper bombs).

JULY 3. Attempted bomb outrage at the Trisanna bridge, Vorarlberg.

JULY 4. Bomb outrage at the police barracks at Wiener Neustadt.

JULY 5. Outbreak of the "War in the Air". See following chapter.

JULY 8. Armed attack against Austrian frontier guards in Tyrol. Telephone cable destroyed near Muerzzuschlag (Styria).

JULY 16. Profanation of a church at Bodensdorf (Carinthia). Demonstrations of Bavarian Nazis at Kiefersfelden on the Austrian-Bavarian frontier.

JULY 19. Festival-house of Passion plays at Erl (Tyrol) burnt down.

JULY 23. Bomb outrage at the country house of the Governor of Lower Austria at Gumpoldskirchen.

AUGUST 6. Austrian auxiliary police constable Schwaninger murdered on the Bavarian-Tyrolese frontier.

AUGUST 11. Arrest of a certain Franz Wolf who confessed to having been hired by National-Socialists at Passau to attempt the murder of Prince Starhemberg.

- AUGUST 14. Discovery of a National-Socialist centre of espionage in Vienna.
- AUGUST 18. A Heimwehr patrol ambushed while marching along the Almerstrasse near Saalfelden. Two severely wounded.
- AUGUST 30. The leader of the Tyrolese Nazis, Hofer, freed by force from Innsbruck gaol and abducted across the frontier into Italy.
- SEPTEMBER 4. Dynamite attempt against Austrian Customs-house at Haselbach, Lower Austria.
- SEPTEMBER 13. Two Austrian Customs officers arrested by force by the Bavarian National-Socialists near the frontier.
- SEPTEMBER 14. Meeting at Graz attacked by National-Socialists using stink-bombs and tear-gas.
- SEPTEMBER 19. Meeting of Heimwehr men attacked by National-Socialists at Wolfsegg. Three dead.
- SEPTEMBER 20. National-Socialist propaganda centre discovered in Vienna; twenty-seven arrests.
- OCTOBER 3. Dr. Dollfuss shot at in Parliament by National-Socialist Dertil. Dollfuss slightly wounded.
- OCTOBER 16. Attempted bomb outrage against Pioneers' barracks at Linz. House searches reveal important stores of explosives. Clashes with National-Socialists at the Universities of Vienna, Graz, and Innsbruck.
- OCTOBER 24. Attempted National-Socialist raid against district government building at Feldbach (Styria). Bomb outrage on premises of the "Ostmaerkische Sturm-scharen" at St. Veit (Carinthia).
- OCTOBER 31. Swastika flag hoisted on Vienna town-hall.
- NOVEMBER 1. Forty-five tombs desecrated at Jewish Cemetery in Hohenau, Lower Austria.
- NOVEMBER 5. Electric-light system damaged and power-station destroyed by National-Socialists at Klagenfurt during a speech made there by Chancellor Dollfuss. Similar disturbances at Voecklabruck (Upper Austria) during a speech made by Prince Starhemberg.
- NOVEMBER 9. National-Socialist demonstrations and celebrations on occasion of tenth anniversary of Hitler *putsch* in Munich.
- NOVEMBER 12. A Heimwehr patrol ambushed by National-Socialists near Lochau, Vorarlberg; one dead, one gravely wounded. Discovery of a secret wireless transmitter at Steyr (Upper Austria).

NOVEMBER 17. Great quantities of National-Socialist propaganda material, uniforms, instructions, etc., found during search of motor-vessel *Fugger*, owned by Bavarian-Lloyd.

NOVEMBER 30. Bomb outrage on premises of the *Volkszeitung* at Ried (Upper Austria).

DECEMBER 11. Severe shooting between Austrian frontier guards and Bavarian National-Socialists at Oberndorf, on the Salzach, when the latter attempted an illegal landing on Austrian shore in a boat.

It is evident from this list that the number of terrorist acts, which in June were still a daily feature in Austrian life, gradually decreased during the following months. This was due to the fact that in the meantime a new weapon had been forged by the Reich National-Socialists which now entered the battle. The "War in the Air" began.

In concluding this chapter, an official police report should be quoted, published in June 1933, which runs as follows:

"It may be taken as certain that both in Vienna and in the provinces the outrages were prepared and carried out in accordance with a well-laid plan. Several facts point to foreign National-Socialists as the instigators. There are testimonies which show that a visit of German Reich Nazis, who arrived by motor-car at the end of May, stood in causal relation to the Vienna bomb outrages. These Reich Germans stayed with Austrian members of the party, and failed to register with the police. They gave precise instructions to the Vienna leaders about the selection of suitable men to commit terrorist acts, mentioning that young and unemployed members of the party should be given preference. They also gave technical advice about the construction, storage, and transport of bombs.

"To increase public alarm and make police investigations more difficult, the outrages were timed to follow one another as closely as possible. At their final conference the Reich German emissaries and Vienna leaders interviewed some of the younger S.S. men, in order that they might themselves make their choice of bomb-throwers and accomplices. The Reich Germans then made a tour of several Austrian towns, and it is assumed that the attack on auxiliary police at Krems may also be attributed to their influence." (*Official Police Report*, dated June 22, 1933.)

To this report the official *Reichspost* added on the same day:

“Two of the emissaries gave their names as Lieutenant-Commander von Kraus and Captain von Bichel, while a third, who, though a Reich-German, had previously commanded a Viennese S.A. unit, acted as intermediary for the other two. Confessions made by some of the men arrested show that these Reich-Germans planned and ordered all the outrages.”

War in the Air

DURING THE summer of 1933 a new kind of warfare was conceived and launched by the German National-Socialists. It was of a kind hitherto unknown—a war in the air, in which wireless and aeroplanes served as guns, and words and printed leaflets as ammunition. It fell like an avalanche on Austria.

The delineation of the frontiers between the two countries, before the incorporation of Austria in the Reich on March 11, 1938, was such that some of the most powerful German wireless stations, such as Munich, Dresden, and Leipzig lay at a distance only of some 200 miles from Vienna. Austrian listeners consequently enjoyed very good receptions from these stations. In some parts of Austria, particularly in the Western Alpine Provinces, German transmitters such as Munich and Stuttgart were even more clearly heard than Vienna. As early as the spring of 1933 attempts were made by the German wireless stations to strengthen the Nazi campaign against the Austrian Government with abusive and belittling comment mingled with Nazi ideology. It will be remembered that one reason why the Dollfuss Cabinet had regarded the visit of Dr. Frank to Vienna as particularly undesirable was that Dr. Frank, only a few days earlier in the course of a speech made over the wireless directed exclusively against Austria, had referred contemptuously to the head of the State he was to visit as “Millimetternich”, alluding to the small stature of Metternich’s successor in the Chancellorship.

Herr Theo Habicht, “Inspector-General for Austria”, after being expelled from Austria on June 14, 1933, and put across the Bavarian frontier, by no means ceased his activity as leader of the Austrian National-Socialists. He only transferred his headquarters to Munich, whence he was well able to keep, with the help of the Munich wireless transmitter, large parts of Austria under his propagandist influence. Originally, it seems, it

had been the intention to use the Munich transmitter only to supplant the interrupted liaison between the Reich and the Austrian National-Socialists, to keep the flock of supporters together and to supply them with the necessary instructions. Soon, however, it became imprudent to issue certain types of instruction through the wireless, which enabled the Austrian Government to take precautionary measures in time. Policy was changed, the Munich wireless transmitter being used from that time on only to belittle the Austrian Government in the eyes of their own nationals. The expelled leaders remained thus to some extent in control of their Austrian campaign.

Soon after the outbreak of the so-called "radio war", Herr Habicht discovered yet another means of exerting his influence on the general atmosphere in Vienna through the air. Aero-planes were put into service for the sole purpose of dropping large quantities of handbills and other propaganda material over the most important towns and villages in Austria, to reinforce the oral propaganda to which their inhabitants were subjected from their wireless sets.

The first official German speeches directed against Austria were made over the German wireless soon after Herr Habicht's arrival in Munich. On the day of his expulsion Herr Habicht had been received by Herr Hitler and made his report to him. The next evening, June 15, a telegram addressed by Herr Hitler to Herr Habicht and the Austrian National-Socialist Party was read from the German wireless stations. It ran as follows:

"Hail to you and to your brave conduct! The Reich and branch leaders of the National-Socialist Workers' Party greet you and the Austrian party. We think with admiration and respect of all party comrades who have been thrown into prison by a crazy system in disregard of all justice for acts for which they are not responsible."

On June 21, 1933, Herr Wagner, State Minister of Bavaria, made a speech from the Munich broadcasting station which was to assure the Austrian comrades that the Reich had by no means renounced its intention of conquering Austria. Two days later Herr Proksch, a Nazi leader whom I have already mentioned and who in the meantime had escaped from Austria, broadcast the following manifesto: "The Austrian movement still lives

and was never so strong as to-day. The struggle which is now beginning will be fought out on the field which the Dollfuss Government itself has chosen and will avail itself of whatever forms and means are most necessary and most suitable. Our object is the overthrow of the Dollfuss Government and the liberation of Austria from the hands of a dishonourable and treacherous gang which at present exercises its despotism in the service of the enemies of the German people. The organization of the new struggle is in full swing. In the next few days preparations will be completed and the necessary orders given. The victory will be ours. Long live Adolf Hitler and Greater Germany! ”

This manifesto, printed on leaflets, was showered down in innumerable copies from aeroplanes on Salzburg and Vienna.

But the real “War in the Ether” did not begin until July 6, 1933, when Herr Habicht had finally installed himself in Munich. Broadcasting from Munich that evening he sought to establish an analogy between the present resistance of the Dollfuss Government against National-Socialism and the Separatist Movement in the Rhineland, in 1923. “The German Rhineland,” he said, “replied with a revolutionary upheaval. German Austria will be just as little inclined to betray the nation and the Reich.” After calling Dr. Dollfuss a traitor and alleging that his policy was financed by French and Czechoslovak money, he announced the determination of the Austrian Nazis to continue in collaboration with those of the Reich. The broadcast finished with an exhortation to the party members who were deprived of their newspapers to pass on to others all printed propaganda on which they could lay hands and “to cut the swastika on every tree and every rock in the country”. Simultaneously it was announced that thenceforward these broadcasts against Austria would be made a regular feature in the programme. They were to take place three times a week at fixed hours.

A strong diplomatic protest was lodged in Berlin by the Austrian Government. The Ravag (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation) filed a separate protest with the International Broadcasting Union. But neither of these steps troubled Herr Habicht very much. On July 11 he made a second and even stronger

speech, in which he described the Dollfuss Government as being "tortuous and dishonest". On July 14, 1933, it was the turn of Herr Rauter, a former leader of the Styrian Heimwehr, who had escaped from Austria and who, together with his chief, Dr. Pfriemer, had thrown in his lot with the National-Socialists. His speech, also broadcast from Munich, was a direct appeal to his "comrades in Styria" not to give way to Dollfuss and to remain faithful to their leader, Adolf Hitler.

The Government of the Reich ignored the Austrian protest and during the following days German aeroplanes appeared over Salzburg, Kufstein, and five other Austrian towns, dropping propaganda leaflets. The tourist season being at its height and Salzburg in particular, owing to the Festival, being crammed with foreigners, these bills and leaflets attracted considerable attention. One, of which many thousand copies were showered down on Salzburg, read as follows:

"German-Austrian comrades!

"Amid the applause of international Jewry and Freemasonry, supported by France and Czechoslovakia, the greatest enemies of the German people, and accompanied by the blessings of Marxists, clericals, and legitimists, the present bogus tyrant Dollfuss, with the rest of the catastrophic Ministers of his Government, is waging a brutal struggle against the National-Socialist German Workers' Party, the one true revolutionary movement for freedom in German-Austria.

"By means of terror, lies, and outrageous breaches of the Constitution he tramples under foot the true will of the people, whence ostensibly 'all power comes'.

"Why does he not, like Adolf Hitler in the Reich, legitimize his new Austrian policy by an appeal to the nation?¹ He cannot maintain that he has the majority of the nation behind him. Because he and the present rulers of the State know too well that the people disown his treasonable policy, and realize that behind the new Front² shelter those very derelict parties and vested interests, which have been the ruin of Austria since 1918. An

¹ When, on March 9, 1938, Dr. Schuschnigg actually made this appeal to the nation, so violently clamoured for by the Nazis, Herr Hitler marched his troops into Austria in time to prevent this appeal from turning out to the advantage of Dr. Schuschnigg and against himself.

² A reference to the then just newly formed Patriotic Front.

election to-day would prove with shattering force to that little megalomaniac Dollfuss that he and the parties behind him are in a hopeless minority.

"This fact is not altered by beautiful sounding declarations of confidence, presented by obscure little societies and cowardly hangers-on of the Government sitting round café tables, or by the numerous parades in different places, which Austrians are persuaded or simply commanded to attend with the incentive of free railway tickets, bribes, and measures of terror. The German people of Austria will not stand in the camp of Dollfuss, that slave of France, who brutally suppresses with bayonets and truncheons the true spirit of the people.

"The German people of Austria follow the Swastika banner of Adolf Hitler, the leader from Upper Austria, who rescued Germany from Bolshevism and will lead German-Austria to freedom. Soon will come the day when all open and secret enemies of Germany in Austria will stand before the tribunal of their people, when the pigmy Dollfuss, together with the other ludicrous figures of this Cabinet of political curiosities, will disappear into the oblivion to which he has already truly belonged.

"Arise there will, as surely as there is providence and divine justice, a National-Socialist German-Austria, in which the united people will build up a State of national freedom and social justice."

As the anti-Austrian broadcasts were regularly repeated from Munich three times a week and German aeroplanes kept flying over Austrian territory in increasing numbers—at times squadrons of seven and more were seen circling above Austrian towns—the Vienna Government finally resolved to consult with the Western Powers about this perpetual violation of their territorial integrity. After protracted exchanges of views between London, Paris, and Rome, a Franco-British démarche was made in Berlin on August 7, 1933, which Italy joined in a somewhat more friendly form. The German Government declared they would try to do their best to put a stop to these attacks against the Austrian Government; but on the very next day Herr Habicht launched another of his violent attacks from Munich, accusing Dr. Dollfuss, whom he described as the head of "a gang of terrorists", of having mobilized the anti-German Powers, especi-

ally France, against Germany, in order to keep himself in power against the will of the majority of the population.

There would be little point in enumerating one by one the long series of attacks which during the following weeks were directed against the Austrian Government from the Munich broadcasting station. They embraced, in fact, the whole range of abusive language, of slander, calumny, libel and defamation, any point in which would have provided the Austrian Government, and Dr. Dollfuss in particular, with ample grounds for legal proceedings against the offenders. They were intermingled with drastic descriptions of alleged ill-treatment of National-Socialist prisoners, appalling conditions in the Woellersdorf concentration camp, and so on.

There was even a certain amount of comedy during this long and bitter campaign. A ridiculous incident occurred on the very summit of the Zugspitze, the highest peak in the Austro-Bavarian Alps. At the beginning of August the famous Viennese Deutschmeister-Kapelle, the most popular and renowned of all Austrian military bands, was engaged in a patriotic concert tour through the whole of Austria. They were invited to give a "non-political" concert at the "Spitzenhotel", a tourist hotel situated 9000 feet high on the top of the mountain which is connected with both the Bavarian and the Austrian side by funiculars. No sooner had the National-Socialists learned of this invitation than they ordered a Storm-Troopers' band of 300 men to proceed to the German side of the Zugspitze peak and disturb the Austrians' performance with a "counter-concert". After negotiations between the two bands, an agreement was made that neither band should mar the performance of the other. The Germans held out until the playing of the Raderzky March, which was more than they could stand. The Austrians, who had kept their word even when the Horst Wessel Lied was sung most provocatively, could not refrain from breaking forth into political personalities when the Nazi big drum thundered down the mountainside and crashed on a rock.

Frequently fervent Nazis had their hair cut in such a fashion that a shaved-off swastika was plainly visible in the centre of their scalps. At an exhibition of pedigree pigs an enthusiastic Hitlerite farmer sent in a pig called "Dollfuss" and insisted on

having its name painted for everybody to see on the outside of the pigsty. Dogs were frequently baptized "Dollfuss", shouted at and kicked in the street, swastikas mown into meadows, and flower beds arranged in the shape of the Nazi symbol. A thousand other devices were conceived to shape the swastika over Austria and to denounce and ridicule the Dollfuss Government.

During the autumn of 1933 the general political atmosphere underwent a perceptible change. Lack of courage and disheartenment had seemed to spread among National-Socialists since the march of the Austrian Legion and the German Army occupation, announced again and again by handbills and wireless for the immediate future, still showed no sign of taking place. Furthermore, during the great national festival in commemoration of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks, and the Catholic Congress, which two events took place simultaneously in Vienna, general sympathies and enthusiasm for Dr. Dollfuss had in fact revealed themselves to be so strong and spontaneous that even the Munich broadcasting station found it advisable to tone down the tenor of their attacks, which would otherwise have proved to be in too striking a contrast with public feeling. Growing warm interest for the fate of Austria manifested itself at the same time more discernibly, not only in Italy and France but also in Great Britain, where the feeling was apparently growing that Austria could hardly be loaded with the responsibility for the existing differences between the two German states. Again it was *The Times* which wrote in its leading article on the occasion of the Vienna Catholic Congress and the speeches Dr. Dollfuss had made before it, on September 12, 1933:

"It is indeed a tragic paradox that two leaders of neighbouring States, each bent upon raising the position of Germans, should find themselves in bitter conflict. The quarrel was begun by Herr Hitler, who seems to have derived from his own Austrian origin a fanatical determination to unite the country of his birth with the country of his adoption. There has never been any very strong popular feeling in this country about the possible fusion of the Austrian and German peoples, but the outrageous disregard of good manners on the German side and the spirited



Dr. Dollfuss' Cabinet after its reconstruction on Sept. 21, 1933. *Seated left to right* : Schuschnigg (arrested March 11, 1938), Stockinger (escaped), Dr. Ender, Major Fey (suicide), Dr. Dollfuss (murdered July 25, 1934), Buresch (dead), Schmitz (arrested March 11, 1938), Kerber. *Standing left to right* : Gleissner, Glas, Karwinsky (arrested March 11, 1938), Col.-Gen. Prince Schoenburg-Hartenstein, Neustaedter-Stuermer (Suicide).

opposition of the Austrian Government have united British sympathies on the side of Dr. Dollfuss, and public opinion will certainly sanction every reasonable measure of diplomatic and financial support which can properly be tendered to the Vienna Government. Dr. Dollfuss on his part has clearly understood that the only way to fight the Nazis with any hope of success is by their own methods; and the unhappy effect of the conflict is therefore that its progress necessarily increases the area in which individual liberties are restricted; for the German propagandist devices can only be frustrated by the closest control of what should be the private affairs of Austrian subjects. The success of the Austrian Chancellor's resistance seems to be proved by the latest outburst of Dr. Goebbels, the propaganda minister of the Reich. He instructs all Germans having relatives, friends, or acquaintances in Austria to write private letters to tell them 'what Adolf Hitler has accomplished for the German people'; and the natural consequence is that the Austrian postal authorities may have to be instructed to intercept and confiscate postal matter from Germany. It is a further astonishing proof of the inability of Germans to see any questions from any point of view but their own that the Nazi party actually criticizes the Austrian Government for forbidding all political activity to the Austrian Nazis, and refers to its own propaganda in Austria as being 'brutally suppressed'. Not one party, but half a dozen parties have had their activities totally prohibited in Germany and the terror of the concentration camp looms over the critic who dares so much as to question the truth of an official statement."

The End of Austrian Social Democracy

DURING THE last quarter of 1933 the Austrian National-Socialist movement suffered a considerable, if only momentary setback. The Catholic Congress, the strong popular movement in favour of a Christian and corporative Austria, and the wave of warm sympathy which Austria enjoyed almost throughout the world were some of the factors responsible for a temporary weakening of the Nazi pressure.

Yet Herr Hitler was not the man to give up hope nor to renounce his ambitions.

Towards the beginning of 1934 new methods of pressure were devised. The mob was mobilized. During the first half of January hardly a day went by without National-Socialist groups appearing in the streets and demonstrating loudly for the Third Reich. These demonstrations reached their pitch on January 13, when Signor Suvich, then Italian Foreign Minister, arrived in Vienna on a return visit to Dr. Dollfuss. The impression which the Italian Minister then gained of the dangers of the National-Socialist movement in Austria was certainly anything but weakened by the fact that the Nazis succeeded in sabotaging the electricity supply along the Ringstrasse, thus plunging, among other buildings, the Imperial Hotel where Signor Suvich stayed, into temporary but none the less complete darkness.

During the second half of January the movement again decreased slightly, since Suvich and Dollfuss had once more been able to induce the Western Powers to make representations in Berlin. Among the population of Vienna however the feeling persisted that a new violent attempt, perhaps even a *putsch*, was being prepared by the National-Socialists, and it was generally expected for the middle of February.

But whether these fears of a *putsch* were well founded or not, they were forestalled by another event of a quite different

character which had the most far-reaching consequences—the final conflict with the Austrian Social Democratic Party.

Having endeavoured so far to give a true picture of the National-Socialist struggle for power in Austria without referring very much to the rest of conditions in Austria during that period, I have intentionally left other political events in Austria and Central Europe untouched except in so far as they had an actual direct bearing on the developments described or were indispensable for their explanation. The crushing of Austrian Socialism however was an event so decisive for the fate of Austria that it requires to be dealt with at some greater length. For it bore very greatly on the evolution of the struggle between the Government and National Socialism.

For fifteen years, from the end of the Great War in November 1918 until the end of 1933, the Social Democratic Party was the most powerful of all political movements in post-war Austria. Although they never succeeded in obtaining an absolute majority in parliament, the Social Democrats were invariably able to muster between 45 and 48 per cent. of votes at all the elections between 1922 and 1930. In Vienna the party commanded 70 per cent. of all votes and represented a two-thirds majority in the Municipal Council. Naturally enough their persistent efforts ever since 1918 were directed towards obtaining an absolute majority and thereby assuming complete control of the State, and particularly in Vienna great efforts were made continually to gain ground and to consolidate positions already held. Consequently, as long as the Austrian parliament still operated, that is until the beginning of March 1933, no Austrian Government was able to enforce any measures which met with the opposition of the Socialists.

Already in the early days of the young Republic the Government of Monsignor Seipel had endeavoured to create some sort of a bulwark or counterweight against the slow but systematic advance of the Socialists. Guided by such considerations Seipel formed, in 1924 and 1925, the so-called "Heimatschutz" movement, which was later to develop into the better-known "Heimwehr". The Heimwehr was not a party whose policy was based on any particular creed or conviction. It was an army of

mercenaries, set up with the help of ample funds from the heavy industries, and actually and quite simply attracted every force in Austria which could be mustered against the Social Democrats. The heavy industries in particular were greatly interested in it, being convinced that only with its help would they be able to do away with the preponderance of Social Democratic organizations among their employees.

This point is of particular importance for a proper understanding of subsequent events. Fundamentally the Heimatschutz followed so-called "anti-Marxist" tendencies, but among themselves its members were not bound together by any coherent *Weltanschauung*. They were partly clerically—partly nationally-minded; partly they were peasants, and partly just unemployed mercenaries who hoped to earn a more or less regular living by joining semi-military organizations. Their leaders were just about equally heterogenous. Prince Starhemberg, the creator of the so-called "Starhemberg Chasseurs Corps", which later became the core and nucleus of the Heimatschutz, was originally a National-Socialist. Later he turned more conservative, but he always remained in a certain opposition to the Church and clerical circles. Major Fey, the leader and organizer of the Heimatschutz in Vienna, was an army officer with the political convictions of a Vicar of Bray, who would take up cudgels on behalf of any party or movement which appeared to be gaining and where new and good opportunities seemed to offer themselves. The Styrian Heimwehr, led by Pfriemer and Rauter, followed strong Nationalist tendencies from the beginning and in 1933 threw in their lot completely with Hitler.

To be able to counter the 40,000 men of the armed Socialist "Schutzbund" and later also the armed Storm Trooper and Black Guard formations of the National Socialists with an organization of their own, Seipel as well as Dollfuss had at first to avail themselves of the Heimwehr, since the regular Army as well as large sections of the gendarmery were strongly Social-Democratic, and therefore not altogether reliable for such purposes. While however Dollfuss regarded the Heimwehr troops merely as an effective means of covering the back of the Government for all eventualities, they were for Starhemberg

and Fey a purpose in themselves. Lacking the support of any popular movement, these two men could only hope to attain power with the help of their armed mercenaries. Here lies the ultimate reason why particularly Fey, a man used to thinking in purely military terms, again and again sought to get into an armed conflict, especially with the Social Democrats, hoping thus to fight his way into power.

The Social Democrats, however, who for fifteen years had actually controlled the State, had no intention of surrendering their position without a struggle. But while the Government, if it aimed at a dictatorship, had to fight against two fronts, namely the Social Democrats on the one side and the Nazis on the other, the Social Democrats themselves found the struggle against the Nazis even harder than that against the Government's Heimwehr.

The Hitler movement was already in full swing in Austria when on March 4, 1933, Dollfuss suspended parliament and thereby struck his first blow against the Social Democrats. Soon afterwards, on March 31, he followed his first step by decreeing the dissolution of the Republican "Schutzbund", a well-armed workers' organization. These measures caused immediate unrest among the working class. A compositors' strike and other political strikes flared up. The more moderate Social Democratic leaders, however, were well aware, in face of the high tide of the Nazi movement at that moment, of the wisdom of avoiding all further weakening of the Dollfuss Government in the workers' own interest. It was these inside the movement who gained the upper hand and persuaded the party to acquiesce quietly in the dissolution of the "Schutzbund". Subsequently, however, when Hitler suppressed their comrades in the Reich, the more radical leaders of the Austrian Social Democrats took up a more determined attitude, to profit from the German lesson. They decided not to go down without a desperate fight. The internal organization of the Schutzbund in spite of its dissolution remained completely intact, and only a negligible proportion of the workers' arms stores had actually been discovered.

But Major Fey was not satisfied with having blotted out the name of the Republican Schutzbund. From March 1933

onwards he kept the Dollfuss Government under continuous pressure, urging it also to dissolve the party itself and to resort to the strongest possible measures to disarm it. Dollfuss at first strongly opposed the demands put forward by Fey and Starhemberg; the stronger Hitler's pressure from outside became, the more he came to feel that he was dependent upon the co-operation of the Social Democrats, even though he had suspended parliament. Repeated conversations took place, even directly between Dollfuss and the more right wing leaders of the workers' organizations, but without result. Dollfuss was unable and unwilling to accept the workers' demand for exclusion of the Heimwehr, and the workers would not agree with Dollfuss' idea of keeping parliament permanently suppressed.

To the Heimwehr the situation seemed unsatisfactory as long as the secret arms depot of the Social Democrats had not been discovered and confiscated. Nor did they abstain from attempts, both with and without the knowledge of the Government, to discover their secret hiding places, thus accentuating friction. In these attempts Fey undoubtedly was the driving force. In his capacity of Minister of Security, and later of Vice-Chancellor, he found ample opportunity to continue his pressure on Dollfuss and finally to convince him of the necessity of measures which actually were not necessary at all, but which sprang solely from the Heimwehr's grudge against the Socialists and its desire to neutralize or even to annihilate a well-armed opponent. Here lies the root of the catastrophic mistakes made in February 1934, which four years later were to have such terrible repercussions.

While the radical Fey pressed with all means at his disposal for severe measures, gradually at the same time the more radical elements among the workers gained the upper hand, urging their supporters, should the Heimwehr or the Government go any further, to put up armed resistance. As early as the autumn of 1933 trade union representatives and workers' executive committees gave out word to their members in all branches of industry and commerce (including the newspaper to whose staff I belonged) that a General Strike was to be called in any of the following events:

1. the dissolution of the Social Democratic party;
2. the banning of the *Arbeiterzeitung* (Workers' Journal);
3. any interference with the functioning of the Social Democratic City Council of Vienna.

The signal for the General Strike was to be the interruption of the Vienna electricity supply by the workers of the Vienna Power Station. The moment lights went out in the city and tram-cars came to a standstill in the streets, strikes were to be proclaimed immediately everywhere, and the workers were to march along the Ringstrasse in mass demonstrations.

Although the Government was by no means ignorant of these instructions, which had been received by hundreds of thousands of workers, Fey continued his raids on the Social Democrats. Again and again his men raided workers' dwellings, party premises, and meeting places in their relentless search for hidden arms, until suddenly things took an unexpected turn. On Sunday, February 11, 1934, the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party held a meeting, and at the final vote, by sheer accident, the more radical of the representatives obtained a majority. The consequence was a resolution immediately adopted to the effect that all further house raids and searches for arms would in future be prevented by force.

An opportunity for a show-down occurred on the very next day. On Monday, February 12, 1934, the police tried to penetrate into the "Hotel Schiff" at Linz, known to be a Social Democratic meeting place, to start in the early hours of the morning on an extensive search for arms. Members of the Schutzbund who happened to be there offered resistance, fire was returned, and three men were killed. The police sent for reinforcements, the workers on their part mobilized all their available men, and before noon two large and well-armed armies confronted each other at Linz. News of the incident was immediately despatched to the Central Party Office in Vienna. After some deliberations the view was taken that armed interference on the part of the Government against the workers had actually taken place and that therefore conditions for a General Strike had arisen. Consequently the General Council of the Party gave orders at 11 A.M. to the Vienna Power Station to cut off electricity.

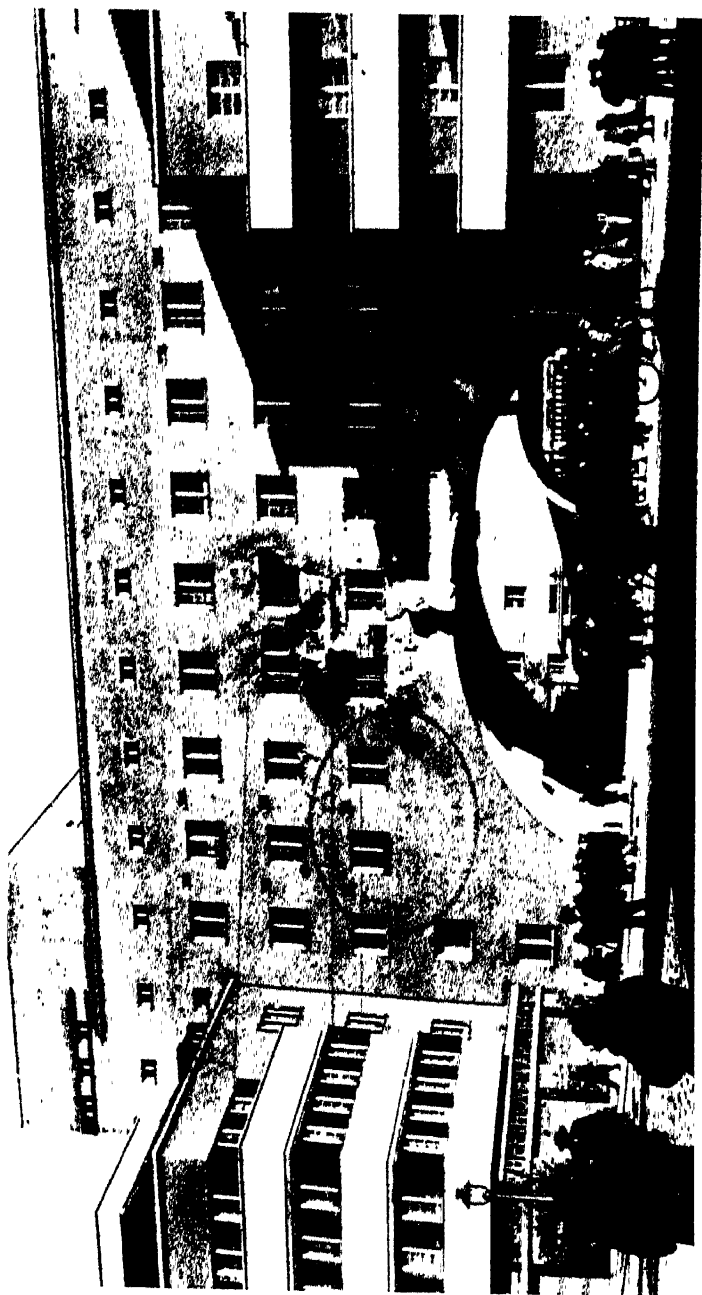
The news of the clashes at Linz reached me towards 10 A.M. in Vienna. I instantly switched on the lights in my office to wait and see whether a General Strike would actually follow. At first nothing happened. But towards 11.20 the lights became dimmer and dimmer, and at 11.27 went out completely. I rushed to the window and looked out into the street. The trams were at a standstill.

There could be no doubt. The General Strike had started.

Unable to leave my office at once, I reached the street only about two hours later. I immediately saw evidence of very serious ado. Several columns of heavy trucks were parked at the Opera, barbed wire fences were unloaded from them, and more and more troop detachments arrived. Three hours later the entire Inner City was completely closed off by barbed wire barricades and by soldiers armed to the teeth. In responsible circles I was informed that these measures had been taken, on the one hand to close the Inner City to the influx of demonstrating workers, on the other because the Government claimed to have received information that the Social Democrats intended to blow up Government buildings.

During the whole day, however, the town remained so completely quiet that the military precautions appeared to be quite superfluous. In the later afternoon, when it was already dark, suddenly rifle fire could be heard; it was followed by the noise of machine-guns and finally the heavy booming of guns. For a short time the telephone was interrupted, but the Post Office soon managed, with the help of auxiliary batteries, to continue the service, and it was now possible to learn more or less accurately what was going on in the suburbs and outer districts.

Fighting took place on this first date at the Karl-Marx-Hof at Heiligenstadt, the Reumannhof in the district of Margareten, the Schlingerhof at Floridsdorf, and the workers' homes at Ottakring and Floridsdorf. These buildings consisted either of enormous modern blocks of flats erected by the Social Democrat City Council, or they belonged to the Social Democratic Party, where the members of the dissolved Schutzbund offered stiff resistance. During the night additional fighting broke out



The workers' tenement house, "Karl Marx Hof," in Vienna after its bombardment by the government troops on February 12, 1934.

at Sandeiten, a workers' settlement at Ottakring, followed the next day by battles round the Fuchsenfeldhof at Meidling, the Goethehof at Floridsdorf and several Municipal tenement houses at Simmering. Severe fighting took place round the railway bridges of the Ostbahn, the Nordbahn and the Franz Josephsbahn, the workers' bathing and swimming establishments, and in several schools. Outside Vienna, severe battles were fought at Linz, Steyr, Bruck a.d. Mur, Kapfenberg, Eggenberg near Graz, and numerous other places along the Southern railway line.

The railways, however, functioned. They had not joined the General Strike, and thus enabled the Government to despatch large contingents of troops from the provinces to Vienna and other centres of fighting.

It has often appeared strange, both to Austrians and abroad, that the total of casualties, dead and wounded, during these three days of battle, was comparatively low. As a continual witness of the fighting in all parts of the town during the whole of those three days and nights I may be able to give an explanation. In no instance during those days did the workers attack the troops, and therefore no open street-fighting occurred. Troops, police, and Heimwehr men who co-operated against the workers had received orders from Major Fey to occupy the Municipal buildings, the workers' homes and clubs. In some of these buildings former Schutzbund men had barricaded themselves in and offered resistance to the armed forces. Most of the buildings, however, were surrendered without fight. On the evening of February 13 my wife telephoned to inform me that machine-guns and mine-throwers had been installed in our garden which was situated opposite one of the Municipal buildings, at a distance of a few hundred yards. These weapons, however, were never brought into action, as the inhabitants of the buildings surrendered. There was thus no actual street-fighting during those three days, only an extensive and stubborn siege. In cases where rifle and machine-gun fire would have been an ineffective prelude to storming, artillery was brought up and aimed with remarkable precision at the

defenders' machine-gun nests, destroying them and thereby breaking their resistance.

It was a typical feature of these battles from February 12 to February 15 that, in contrast with the National-Socialist *putsch* in July of the same year, the Socialists did not attack Government buildings but merely attempted, by calling a General Strike and defending their own buildings, to bring about a surrender of the armed forces. If for no other reason but the fact that the different battle grounds were far too distant from each other, a systematic concentration of all the Socialist forces towards one single objective would have been quite out of the question.

An estimate of the total casualties on both sides is given by Dr. Schuschnigg in his book: 128 dead and 409 wounded on the Government side, and 193 dead and about 300 wounded on the other side, including civilians accidentally involved. These figures appear to be roughly correct and conform with those I was able to obtain from other sources. But probably the number of wounded on the workers' side was actually twice or even thrice as great, since many did not dare present themselves at hospitals, thus escaping notice and calculation.

The conquest of the Social Democratic Municipal buildings and the crushing of the Republican Schutzbund practically brought about the end of the once so powerful Social Democratic Party. The Vienna Town Hall, for fifteen years the main stronghold of the Social Democratic administration, was occupied by the Heimwehr on February 12, 1934, the red flag was hauled down and the green and white Heimwehr banner hoisted. The premises of the Social Democratic Party, the *Vorwaerts* building, were occupied by the police and Heimwehr troops, and all Social Democratic and Liberal papers of the Left were banned. The following day saw the formal dissolution of the whole party throughout Austria. In spite of ample evidence that only its left wing had actually been involved in the fighting, its entire funds were confiscated, all its arms seized and all other party organizations such as welfare, sports, broadcasting and educational centres were dissolved.

Meeting places were put under police supervision or were occupied, and all further activity was forbidden. Several thousands of arrests were made during the first days alone, and although the greater part of the arrested were released after a few days, their examination was sufficient to reveal all political cross-connexions, to destroy them, and to render all further party work impossible. A number of members of the *Schutzbund* together with their leaders escaped into Czechoslovakia, where Otto Bauer and Dr. Julius Deutsch established a propaganda centre of the Austrian Social Democrats at Brno.

It seems certain to-day that the strong measures of the Dollfuss Government against the Social Democrats after the bloody events of February 1934 were entirely unnecessary. Had the Government, after the victory of their arms, shown tolerance and leniency, and had not a wonderfully well developed and almost perfect organization been razed completely, Austria might have been spared many a difficulty in the following years, and perhaps even conquest by Herr Hitler.

There were, however, several reasons for the ruthless methods adopted by the Dollfuss Government against a party whose patriotic Austrian attitude could never have been questioned. It was the wish neither of Dollfuss nor of Dr. Schuschnigg, then Minister of Justice, to suppress the whole of Austrian Social-Democracy. But both statesmen were under the double pressure of the *Heimwehr* on the one hand, and Signor Mussolini on the other. The Austrian workers' movement had always been regarded by Italian Fascism as its greatest enemy, and the Austrian Social Democratic Party itself had not only shown its fierce opposition to the Fascist régime, but had been responsible for personal attacks on Signor Mussolini on more than one occasion. And more than the Government troops and the police, Major Fey and Prince Starhemberg with their army of mercenaries had been the real victors of the February struggle.

The Christian Social members of the Government, led by Dr. Dollfuss and Dr. Schuschnigg, were not particularly anxious to allot any more public posts to their own party friends. All

the more anxious were the leaders of the Heimwehr to reap the fruits of their victory by getting their men, mostly hired partisans, into the jobs and positions which eventually became vacant. Social Democratic officials and civil servants had therefore to be dismissed from their posts wherever possible in order to make room for jobless Heimwehr men. Thus not only were leading positions in the State handed over to the Heimwehr, but every single member of that organization who could prove that he had actively taken part in the defeat of the Schutzbund received a so-called "Einstellungsschein", an official certificate entitling him to preference over other applicants whenever a vacant post was to be filled. Furthermore, through the dissolution of the Social Democratic organizations and the trade unions the Heimwehr were expecting a new inrush of prospective members, with whom they hoped to strengthen considerably their own ranks. Finally, once again, Signor Mussolini was bringing every pressure to bear to procure the dissolution of the last anti-Fascist party still existing in Austria. The moment was favourable to him, as negotiations between Rome and Vienna were well on their way at the time for the conclusions of the Rome Protocols between Italy, Austria, and Hungary, which were actually signed only a month later.

Thus it was that, under double pressure from Italy and from the Heimwehr, Dollfuss irretrievably lost the support of the Austrian working class. For four full years contact between the Government and the working class remained severed, and it was only by the pressure of circumstances immediately before his abortive plebiscite that Dr. Schuschnigg was obliged to seek it anew and succeeded in re-establishing it. But it was too late then. During the whole of the intermediate period the Austrian working class, still terrified by the mere memory of what had happened to them in February 1934, had stood outside politics. The Government had lost one of their most powerful allies, if not the only ally whose firm determination to defend Austria's independence with arms if necessary had never for a single moment been in doubt.

The attitude of the National-Socialists during those critical days of February 1934 puzzled many observers at that time.

Yet it was quite intelligible. Both Government and Heimwehr had felt more or less certain, in view of Herr Habicht's violent campaign in January, that the supporters of Herr Hitler were bound to come out in an open armed rebellion against the Government, either at the moment of its struggle with the Social Democrats, or at least directly afterwards. This, however, did not happen. To the National-Socialists the determination of the Government in the crushing of the Socialists, and their impressive display of armed might, came as a great surprise. On the other hand their intervention at that particular moment was tactically impossible, as it would necessarily have led people to the conclusion that the Hitlerites were making common cause with the Social Democrats. Lastly, during the days of actual fighting the view was not seldom expressed in National-Socialist circles that the Government were actually doing the Nazis' work, and very hard work at that. For the National-Socialists were well aware that their brown battalions would have been faced with an extremely difficult task once they came up, as they were bound to do one day, against the then still very well-armed Austrian workers.

Nevertheless the policy of "Wait and See" as adopted by Herr Habicht during those days incurred the stern criticism and disapproval of the Austrian National-Socialists, the radical and extremist elements among whom held the view that the weakening of the Government forces after the four days' battle would have presented them with a unique chance to lead their Storm Troopers and Black Guards to a new attack—a chance which had now been missed. Herr Habicht therefore resolved, under the weight of this criticism, to resume his activities in Munich, and only a few days after the ceasing of fire in Vienna launched a new attack against Dollfuss, an attack which may have been inspired at least partly by the hope of finding the Government, after the elimination of the Socialists from public life, more willing to enter into a coalition with the National Socialists.

Broadcasting from Munich on February 19, 1934, Herr Habicht announced "a week's truce, as from to-morrow, during which the Austrian Nazis will refrain from any acts of violence or attacks on the Dollfuss Government provided the Govern-

ment maintain a similar attitude towards the Nazis. If by February 28 the Government have still not decided to co-operate with the Nazi Party in Austria and give it full rights, there will be an armed uprising of the Austrian National-Socialists."

This was the first ultimatum, with a time-limit, which the National-Socialists presented to Dollfuss, and at the same time the first open threat to use force. But Dollfuss, especially in those days, saw no reason why he should give way to National-Socialist pressure, for a twofold reason: in the first place the entire Austrian Army as well as the defence corps of the Heimwehr and other organizations were still in full mobilization; and secondly a joint declaration in favour of Austria's independence had been made only two days earlier, by Great Britain, France, and Italy, reading as follows:

"The Austrian Government has enquired of the Governments of France, Britain, and Italy as to their attitude with regard to the dossier which it has prepared to establish the fact of German interference in the internal affairs of Austria, and which it has communicated to them.

"The conversations which have taken place between the three Governments on this subject have shown that they take a common view as to the necessity of maintaining Austria's independence and integrity in accordance with the relevant treaties."

This declaration convinced the Austrian Government that, in case of an attempted Nazi rising, the three Great Powers, and primarily Italy, would lend Austria military help in her defensive struggle. It is interesting to note that the decision of the three Powers had already been made on February 9, 1934, and was communicated to the Austrian diplomatic representatives in London, Paris, and Rome on February 13, 1934. Its publication, however, had been held up until the restoration of peace and order in Austria, and it appears that Herr Habicht, when he broadcast his ultimatum, was still ignorant of its existence. This was apparently the chief reason why Herr Habicht, during those days, came into a severe conflict not only with his chiefs in Berlin but also with the National-Socialists in Austria.

Obviously in view of the Three-Power-Declaration, he tried to

qualify the terms of his ultimatum, and in another speech on February 22 announced that after peace had been concluded between the Nazis and the Dollfuss Government the "Thousand Marks Ban" would be withdrawn, and that furthermore the Reich Government had elaborated a Four-Year-Plan for Austria which provided for the investment of all available surplus of German capital in Austria and for the creation of Vienna as the artistic and musical centre of the Greater German Reich. For the first time, it will be seen, promises appeared in the place of threats. On the following day the ultimatum was further qualified to the effect that "no armed uprising" would take place on February 28, but that from that day "the struggle would be resumed".

Nevertheless the Government took care to despatch all those regiments of the Heimwehr which were at their disposal in Vienna, and had not yet been disarmed, to the Bavarian frontier, to forestall any possible surprise. But nothing happened. The 28th February, the 1st and 2nd March went by without the least incident taking place either in the interior of the country or at the frontiers.

A few days later, however, it became known that Herr Habicht had been called to Berlin to report to Herr Hitler and had been made to hear unpleasant things about uttering threats and announcing dates. Actually this ultimatum remained Herr Habicht's last great deed; after it he gradually disappeared into the background, probably also for the reason that his activities were strongly disapproved of even by the Austrian National-Socialists themselves. At a meeting of the Reich Germans in Austria on March 1, 1934, a resolution was adopted and broadcast from the German wireless stations, "to protest to Herr Hitler, basing itself on knowledge of all the facts, against the methods used by Herr Habicht against Austria, that is, a lying propaganda which misleads the German public and seriously damages the pan-German cause, and to appeal to the Reich Chancellor to put an end to these goings-on."

Thus, as ingloriously as he had fought in Austria, Herr Habicht disappeared from the scene.

After the defeat of the Social Democrats and the eclipse of

Thus Died Austria

Herr Habicht, the Austrian Government enjoyed three months of relative quiet.

On March 17, 1934, the Rome Pact between Italy, Austria, and Hungary was concluded, resulting in a still stronger attachment of Austria to Italy, which was to prove its value during the critical days of July 1934.

On May 1, 1934, the new Austrian Constitution was finally promulgated by Dr. Dollfuss, re-shaping Austria into the new form of a Christian German Corporative State.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Nazis Rise

THE FOLLOWING three months of comparative quiet in Austria were put to good use by the Nazis. A thorough reorganization of all their forces was carried out. Headquarters were transferred back from Munich to Vienna. In Austria herself the movement was strengthened, and endeavours made to put it on a wider and more comprehensive foundation. Their chief aim, however, to canvass for new partisans among the former Social Democrats, met only with a very limited success. In spite of the bitterness they felt against the Government, the working class refused more emphatically than ever to have anything to do with the Hitlerites.

Negotiations came next, and attempts were made to establish contacts with some of the more influential Austrian politicians and to win their support for a change of *régime* in Austria. It has already been mentioned that in the spring of 1933 Dr. Rintelen, governor of Styria, had charged himself with the task of mediating between the National-Socialists and Dr. Dollfuss. The Chancellor, however, soon enough became aware that Dr. Rintelen entertained rather too warm sympathies for the Nazi cause, and after a conflict which broke out in the Cabinet Council in May 1933, Dr. Rintelen was compelled to relinquish his office as Minister of Education. Back at his old post of governor of Styria, Dr. Rintelen there too displayed an activity which to Dr. Dollfuss seemed not devoid of serious danger. Since no other method of excluding Rintelen, who commanded a strong following in Styria, from political life recommended itself, it was decided in August 1933 to appoint him to the post of Austrian Minister to Rome, where at least he would be under the direct control and influence of Signor Mussolini. His new appointment did not, however, prevent Dr. Rintelen from remaining in close contact with the leaders and representatives of the re-organized Austrian National-Socialist Party.

Dr. Rintelen was in many ways a remarkable man, and in his book Dr. Schuschnigg gives a very vivid and sharp portrait of him.¹ "Undoubtedly the governor of Styria ought to be numbered among the most interesting, striking, and mobile characters on the Austrian political scene. Many people in those days must have gained the impression that his delight in political tactics was sometimes keener than his clear vision ahead. At all events, Rintelen was invariably the man of constant activity whose temperament knew no repose. Whoever had a chance of observing this strange and, in his way, certainly talented politician at close quarters, could not have failed to notice the astonishing adaptation of his habits of life to the trend of his ideas and aims. During long sittings or conferences it was his practice to use up an uncanny number of matches, with which he set fire, in play, to notes, memoranda, or other scraps of paper he might happen to have in his possession at the time. On that account Dollfuss sometimes jokingly called him a pyromaniac. At a later time it may become possible to discover the light and shade interwoven so intriguingly in his somewhat daemonic character, and then perhaps it will become evident that much of what one was accustomed to interpret politically represented in reality a psychological problem."

Boundless ambition and the iron will to attain power were the most conspicuous qualities of this man, who never for a single moment forgot the supreme aim of his life—to reach the top of the political ladder in Austria and, if possible, even beyond Austria. In another passage of his book Schuschnigg describes a conversation which he had "with a very well-known Austrian politician who represented Austria abroad". There can be no doubt that the passage refers to Rintelen, and the conversation took place in May 1934, during the inauguration of the Biennale at Venice. Rintelen then expressed the opinion that Austria's economic development was rapidly drifting towards a collapse, and in support of this view mentioned the crisis on the sale of Styrian apples (!) which happened to be acute at the moment. He advised Schuschnigg to look out in time for a new and safe job outside politics. Shortly afterwards in Vienna Schuschnigg was asked whether he would be prepared, in the event of his

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 97.

being called upon to form a Cabinet, to accept Rintelen in the Government, Rintelen having made it understood that he would have no objection to belonging to a Cabinet led by Dr. Schuschnigg.

These few traits may serve to illustrate Rintelen's ever-changing attitude, which goes far towards explaining his later actions.

Simultaneously with the Nazis' negotiations with Rintelen, whom they had chosen as the new Chancellor in the place of Dollfuss, the rearmament of the Austrian National-Socialists and artillery preparations for the uprising planned for July were vigorously pursued. For the time being it was again necessary to plunge the population into a new wave of alarm and unrest, and at the same time to put the willingness and efficiency of their own men to a thorough test.

A new tide of terrorism began on May 6, 1934. It proved to be still more ruthless than that of June 1933, if that was possible, and employed still more effective weapons. The following list of events in chronological order includes the most important terroristic acts committed by the National-Socialists from May until July 1934.

MAY 6. Three bomb outrages at Vienna railway stations; one person injured.

MAY 8. Arrest of Hans Guenther Patzig, 17-year-old Reich German, who confessed to having planned an attempt on the life of Dr. Dollfuss.

MAY 9. One bomb and twenty-two paper-bomb outrages in Vienna; one person seriously injured.

MAY 10. Explosion of numerous blasting cartridges at Salzburg during a speech by Dr. Dollfuss.

Railway bridge destroyed near Salzburg.

Fifty-five blasting cartridges with electric time-fuses discovered at Maxglan aerodrome, near Salzburg, immediately before landing of Dollfuss's aeroplane.

One auxiliary policeman killed at Knittelfeld (Styria) while trying to remove a swastika flag thrown by the Nazis across a high-tension cable.

MAY 11. One Austrian auxiliary policeman abducted near Scharnitz (Tyrol) across Bavarian border by two members of Austrian Nazi Legion.

- MAY 16. Exchanges of shots between Austrian frontier guards and Reich German storm-troopers at Austrian-Bavarian frontier.
- MAY 17. Seven bomb outrages on railway tracks in the neighbourhood of Innsbruck; tracks badly damaged.
- MAY 18. Bomb outrages on railway tracks at Purkersdorf, near Vienna (western railway), Ulrichskirchen (eastern railway), and Gumpoldskirchen (southern railway).
- MAY 19. Explosion of eighteen blasting cartridges at Salzburg. Electric-light cables and power-station at Salzburg damaged.
- MAY 20. Bomb outrage at Salzburg festival-hall; mosaic frescoes and front of building destroyed up to third storey.
- MAY 21. Bomb outrage at Ischl; pump-room destroyed.
- MAY 23. Bomb outrages in the streets of Innsbruck and Wels.
- MAY 24. Bomb outrage at Archiepiscopal Palace and flower-shop at Salzburg; heavy material damage.
- MAY 25. Bomb outrage at Ried; one person killed.
- MAY 26. Village church at St. Paul (Carinthia) destroyed by bombs.
Bomb outrages on two churches and post-office at Feldkirch (Vorarlberg); heavy damage.
- MAY 27. Vestry of a church at Linz destroyed by bombs.
- MAY 28. Electric power-station at Braunau on the Inn (birthplace of Herr Hitler) blown up by bombs.

Apart from the intimidation of the population, all these outrages obviously had the purpose of frightening foreign visitors into staying away from Austria before the beginning of the tourist season. Martial law was declared by the Government in all places where bomb outrages and damage to State or communal property had occurred. Local civilian corps (Ortswehren) for self-help against the Nazis were established wherever possible. Yet during the weeks to come outrages still increased in number, until sometimes several would occur on one day. The most important among them deserve to be mentioned:

Bomb outrages at Castle Leopoldskron (property of Professor Max Reinhardt).

Shots exchanged with Nazis at Moegggers, Vorarlberg, three seriously wounded.

Bomb outrage on electric power station at Floridsdorf, near Vienna.

Bomb outrage on the house of Peasant-Leader Reither, at Langenrohr.

Bomb outrage on the house of leader of the Patriotic Front, Dr. Mayr, at Kapfenberg.

Bomb outrages on the southern and western railway, near Vienna, causing serious damage to traffic.

Railway bridge blown up on the Semmering.

Telephone cable cut between Woergl and St. Johann (Tyrol).

Landing-places on the Danube destroyed near Krems and Nussdorf.

Mountain road across Lueg pass blocked by iron girders; two policemen killed by Nazis when trying to remove them.

Further bomb outrages on all four main railway lines spreading from Vienna.

Bomb outrage on a Vienna post-office, a Christian Social clubhouse at Floridsdorf, and the Lusthaus pavilion in the Prater.

Vienna metropolitan railway laid off near Hietzing by bomb outrage.

Stink bombs found in antechamber of Prince Starhemberg's offices at the Ballhausplatz.

Large hidden depots of explosives found at Telfs (Tyrol), Salzburg, and in a wood near the Bavarian frontier in Upper Austria.

Railway line across the Arlberg laid up by blowing up of several high-tension poles near Bludenz. Railway line of western railway destroyed near Amstetten and Linz; high-tension cables of Vienna-Bratislava electric railway cut.

Bombs thrown into meeting of the "Ostmaerkische Sturm-scharen" at Paternion (Carinthia), and into demonstrations of the Patriotic Front at Vienna and Salzburg; many injured.

The police were able to arrest a number of the perpetrators. When questioned, they stated that they had received payment of 15 schillings per head for the execution of each bomb outrage. We continue our list:

Bomb outrage on Inland Revenue Office at Salzburg; two persons seriously injured.

Bomb outrage on Northern Railway at Strasshof, and on Southern Railway at Leoben.

Bomb outrage on the "Stern" Restaurant at Salzburg.

Bomb outrage on power-station at Neuberg (Styria); three poles upset.

Several telegraph cables cut in the Burgenland.

The "Seeboden" bridge, near Spittal (Carinthia), blown up and destroyed.

All these outrages, as well as many smaller ones which cannot be mentioned here, occurred between the end of May and the 12th of June 1934. They averaged ten, later on even as many as fifteen per day. The Government left nothing undone to prevent further outrages. Premiums were offered up to 1000 schillings for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrators; railways, bridges, and public buildings were kept under guard day and night; all meeting places of the Nazis, as far as they were known to the authorities, were continuously raided and searched. While many crimes were thus probably prevented from being committed, continuous reinforcements from the Reich, on the other hand, made sure that they did not stop.

On June 14, 1934, when the wave of Nazi terrorism was at its height, Herr Hitler travelled to Venice, where he conferred with Signor Mussolini. It was their first meeting, and it proceeded, as is now well known, in an atmosphere anything but friendly and cordial. Signor Mussolini made it clear beyond doubt that Italy was vitally interested in the independence of the Austrian State. Co-operation between Germany and Italy, on the lines suggested by Herr Hitler, was unconditionally refused by Signor Mussolini, who referred to the methods employed by the Nazis in Austria and indicated that he would be pleased to receive from Herr Hitler formal assurances of the recognition of Austria's integrity and independence.

Nevertheless bomb outrages continued. The Austrian Government went as far as publishing photographs of explosives found at Telfs and Innsbruck which showed unmistakably, on each bomb, the marking, "Reich Ministry of War, Army Depot, Berlin". After Herr Hitler's departure from Venice, these outrages suddenly increased considerably in violence. Numerous cases occurred in which direct fire was opened by Nazis on gendarmes who tried to frustrate them. A number of gendarmes and auxiliary police were killed during that period.

On June 26, 1934, Dr. Dollfuss once more went to Rome. He enjoyed a particularly warm reception from Signor Mussolini,

who invited him and his wife and children to spend their summer holidays at his own country house, at Riccione. This invitation was accepted, and on July 15 Frau Dollfuss and her two children arrived at Riccione. The Chancellor himself was to join them during the last days of July. But they were the last days of his life. He never saw his wife and children again.

Between July 1st and 10th, after Dr. Dollfuss had returned to Vienna and renewed pressure had been brought to bear on Herr Hitler by Signor Mussolini, there was a temporary lull in the fighting. Outrages reduced themselves during this period from fifteen to two or three daily.

July 11 however witnessed a new outbreak, this time directed against Government buildings, electric power stations, railways, bridges, and telegraph cables.

The Government resorted to the last measure of defence still at their disposal: the commitment of any such outrages was officially declared as a capital crime demanding capital punishment. Death sentence for acts of terrorism was officially introduced.

The National-Socialists responded appropriately. Word was given out to their followers to the effect that the first case in which such a death sentence was actually carried out would be the signal for a general Nazi uprising. The moment the Government dared to execute one of their men, the great Nazi *putsch*, prepared for long and discussed in all its details with Dr. Rintelen, was to break out throughout the country.

Dr. Rintelen in those days behaved strangely enough for an official diplomat. Knowing full well that Dr. Dollfuss was due to arrive in Rome on July 25, he did not wait for the head of his Government, but having been advised by Nazi headquarters that their big hour had come, had left Rome on July 23, and gone straight to Vienna. There he waited, like his friends, for the signal—the execution of the first death sentence against a terrorist. But, as has happened so often in history, the cue was misleading, and the Nazi *putsch* broke out two days too soon.

In fact, a truly grotesque situation had arisen.

On July 24, 1934, amidst the high tide of National-Socialist terrorism, a policeman had been shot and killed on the bank of the Danube by two Socialist extremists, Josef Gerl and Rudolf Anzboeck. They were caught, and since the law did not provide

for a distinction to be made between National-Socialist and Social Democratic terrorists, the military court passed death sentences on both. A petition for mercy was not accepted by President Miklas in the case of Gerl, and three hours after the passing of the sentence he was hanged. The death sentence against Anzboeck was commuted to hard labour for life.

There could be no doubt about the case of Gerl: the Government had not stopped at a mere threat, and the first terrorist had been executed. But the fact of his having been the wrong kind of terrorist split National-Socialist opinion, one group among the leaders regarding the execution as the agreed signal for the uprising, the other holding the view that it was too soon, the executed man having been a Socialist and not a Nazi.

So half a *putsch* broke out the following day, the Nazis of Vienna revolting, but not those of the provinces.

In the provinces, where the revolt was to have started simultaneously, disorder broke out at entirely different times, and in many places one or even two days later.

The rebellion thus was bound to fail in the end.

In the beginning, in Vienna, things went well for the Nazis.

On Wednesday, July 25, 1934, about 150 members of a special National-Socialist standard assembled at the gymnasium of the "Stiftskaserne", a military barracks in the eighth district of Vienna. About two-thirds of these men were former members of the Army and of the police forces who had had a special training in armed assaults. A hundred and forty-four men were loaded on lorries and towards 11.30 A.M. were driven off in the direction of the Federal Government Palace, at the Ballhausplatz. At the same time another detachment of about 120 National-Socialists which had been assembled at a different place was moved towards the Central Building of the Ravag, the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, in the Johannesgasse.

Those driving to the Ballhausplatz were well disguised. They wore the regular uniforms of the Austrian Army and of the Police Force, which, having been expelled for their various political offences, they were no longer actually entitled to wear, and which should have been returned. These 144 men were under the command of a "Major", a "Captain", and a "Colonel of



[Photo: Topical Press Agency, Ltd.]

Police attacking the Vienna wireless station occupied by National Socialist insurgents during the "putsch", of July 25, 1934.

the Police Force", notwithstanding the fact that the wearers of these uniforms had never held officers' ranks.

Although the changing of the military guard and of the police posts at the Government Palace was to take place only at 1 P.M. the sentries posted at the main entrance allowed the first lorry with the false soldiers, who outwardly looked unimpeachably correct, to pass without any objection. The lorry drove into the courtyard, the soldiers got off, disarmed the guards and the police posted at the main entrance, occupied the post, and stormed upstairs to the rooms of the Chancellery.

The Government, on their part, were on the alert, having received information from their confidants during the morning that "something was in the air" and some special National-Socialist action was impending. A Cabinet Council which had begun its sitting at 11 A.M. was adjourned after a few minutes; for this reason, most of the ministers left the Chancellery and proceeded to the War Ministry. While the rebels had hoped to capture the complete Cabinet, only Dr. Dollfuss, Major Fey, and Dr. Karwinsky, Under-Secretary of State for Security, had remained behind.

Once the guards at the main entrance had been disarmed, the rest of the lorries were able to drive into the Court of the Chancellery without any obstruction, and their detachments instantly swarmed through the building. The front doors were locked from within, 144 Nazis armed to the teeth occupied one room after another, forcing officials with their arms to surrender, and pursued the search for the vanished ministers.

Dollfuss was alone in his study, unarmed. His first impulse was to escape to an adjoining room, but he was caught up by the rebels who had already reached his door. At the trial of Planetta, the Chancellor's murderer, the Chancellor's door-keeper, Herr Hedviček, the only surviving witness of what had happened during the next few seconds, gave the following account:

"On hearing the shout 'Hands up!' in the hall I went to look after the Chancellor. He asked me if I had a revolver, but I had none. I accompanied the Chancellor as far as the congress hall and locked the door. Suddenly a man, Planetta, appeared on the Chancellor's left and aimed at him from about half a

yard. The Chancellor raised his hands but without touching Planetta's weapon. *And at this moment the two shots were fired.* There had not been a double discharge but two distinct shots. The Chancellor turned, fell, and cracked his head."

Planetta himself described the scene at his trial as follows:

"Along with others I dashed up the stairway of the Chancellery and entered a small room. There I saw a big man and a small man. The big man, I believe, was the Chancellor's servant. All I can say about the shooting is that my revolver went off somehow. I had set the trigger for a double discharge: that was why there were two shots. When I presently looked round I saw the small man on the floor and then first recognized him as the Chancellor. I told Herr Dollfuss to get up. Herr Dollfuss replied: 'I cannot.'"

Meanwhile all the other inmates of the building had been disarmed and arrested by the rebels. While there remains now no doubt about the actual murder of Dr. Dollfuss, of which every detail is known, the part played by Major Fey during the disarming will probably never be completely cleared up. Major Fey committed suicide on the morning of March 16, 1938, without having ever given an exact account of what he saw and did during the noon hour of July 25, 1934. Broadcasting from Vienna on the same evening, he gave the following account, which, however, carefully passes over many of the most essential details:

"We were having a Council of Ministers at 11 o'clock this morning at the Chancellery of the Ballhausplatz. At 11.45 a report was brought into our room stating that an action against the Government was being prepared at the Heimwehr barracks at the Siebensterngasse. At the moment the sheet of paper on which this message had been sent was brought into the room we saw a number of private motor-cars occupied by heavily armed soldiers, or people at least appearing to be soldiers, drive up at the door of the Government Palace. In practically no time they had forced their way into our council room, headed by three ringleaders, who appeared in the uniform of a major of the Army, a captain of the Army, and a colonel of the police force. At the point of the revolver they forced the Chancellor, together with the Under-Secretary of State for Public Security, Karwin-

sky, to leave the room, and then again with their pistols forced me and my other colleagues of the Government to go into a small room adjoining the council room.

"At 2.30 P.M. a patrol asked us to go over and see the Chancellor. We found Dollfuss there seriously wounded on a sofa, and he asked us to look after his family when he was dead and to inform the other members of the Government that he had been killed. We were then escorted out of the room again and had to spend three and a half agonizing hours, during which the Nazis, armed with rifles, threatened several times to kill us."

A heartrending account of Dr. Dollfuss' last hours and of his final conversation with Major Fey is contained in the statement of Police Constable Greifeneder, who testified the following:

"I had received orders to stand by, and at 10 A.M. took up my post near the Accounts Department, on the fourth floor of the Federal Chancellery, No. 2 Ballhausplatz, where I was to be on duty till 1 P.M. A little before 1 P.M. I heard a noise on the stairs and, opening the door leading to the staircase, I was confronted by five or six men in uniform, who told me to put up my hands. Looking down to the third floor, I saw two more uniformed men levelling their pistols at my colleague Messinger and disarming him. I calculate that it took ten to twelve minutes to clear the whole Chancellery.

"Between 1.30 and 1.45 a rebel came up to us in the yard and asked my colleague, District Inspector Jellinek, whether we were aware that the Chancellor had been wounded. When we replied in the negative, he asked if we would like to see him, and we, of course, said we would. He then took Jellinek and myself upstairs, where we found the Chancellor in what is known as the Corner Room, lying on the floor in the window nearest the Conference Room. He was lying on his back with his hands stretched out. My colleague and I at once said that a doctor must be sent for, and we were directed to the 'Major' who was in the yard outside, but he refused, saying that no one was to leave the building. Jellinek then went into the back yard and asked whether there was no doctor among the interned occupants of the building. Finding that there was none, he asked for bandages. While he was still in the back yard, a rebel entered the front courtyard with bandages and asked if anyone had first-

aid knowledge. My colleague Messinger and myself volunteered to help and were escorted upstairs, where we found the Chancellor still in the position in which we had left him. He was unconscious. One of the rebels cut open his coat and shirt with scissors, handed us the bandages, and went away. There were still a few Putschists in the room, and one sat at a desk smoking a cigarette. I held the wounded Chancellor's head and raised him, while Messinger applied the bandage. I then told Messinger that we must get the Chancellor on to some kind of bed, so we dragged up a red sofa and laid him on it. A few of the Putschists helped us. We then washed the Chancellor and bathed his forehead with eau-de-Cologne. One Putschist clumsily sprinkled lysoform over his upper lip, which we wiped away with cotton-wool. The Chancellor then regained consciousness. His first question was: 'What has happened to the other ministers?' to which I answered: 'As far as I know, they are safe.' The Chancellor then told us that a major, a captain, and a number of soldiers had come in and shot at him. He then inquired whether he could not speak with a minister, and asked in the first place for Dr. Schuschnigg. One of the rebels directed us, on inquiry, to the Major. One of them, the Captain I think it was, went out and fetched the Major, who came and said: 'You have sent for me, Chancellor. What do you want? If you had not resisted, you would have been all right,' to which the Chancellor replied: 'I had to, I too was a soldier.' The Chancellor repeated his wish to speak with Dr. Schuschnigg, but the Major said, 'Schuschnigg is not here.' The Chancellor then asked for Karwinsky, but the Major made no reply. He then got up and, after some time, returned with Minister Fey. Meanwhile the Chancellor asked if he could be taken to a sanatorium or have a doctor, and also asked for a priest. We appealed in vain to the same effect, and I tried to comfort the Chancellor by telling him that the wound was a flesh wound and needed no doctor. The Chancellor, however, seemed to realize the gravity of his injuries, for he asked us to lift his arms and feet and, when we did so, said: 'I can feel nothing. I'm paralysed.' He then added: 'How good you fellows are to me. Why weren't the others, too? All I wanted was peace. It was we who were attacked; we had to defend ourselves. May God forgive the

others.' Minister Fey then arrived under escort and, sitting on the arm of the sofa, I heard all that was said. I also renewed the compresses. The Chancellor greeted Fey affectionately and asked how he was, to which Fey replied: 'As you see, quite all right.' The Chancellor next asked after the other members of the Cabinet, and was told that they too were safe and sound. He then asked Fey to request Mussolini, the Italian Premier, to take charge of his wife and children. Fey promised. The Chancellor then said that he wished Dr. Schuschnigg to take over the Government, or, in the event of his death, Skubl, Vice-President of the Police. At this point one of the rebels came up and, leaning across the Major, said: 'Chancellor, come to business, we're not interested in that. Give orders to the authorities to refrain from taking any action against the Federal Chancellery until Rintelen has taken over the Government.' The Chancellor then, after reflecting for a few seconds, replied that he wished all unnecessary bloodshed to be avoided. Lastly, he said to Fey: 'Take care of my wife and children.' The Putschists then pulled Minister Fey away and took him out on to the balcony. What happened there, I do not know. The Chancellor again complained at being allowed no doctor, fearing that his phlegm was choking him. It was, however, not the phlegm that caused his choking feeling, but blood, which we had constantly to wipe away from his mouth. The death-rattle now became more and more audible, and the Chancellor gradually lapsed into unconsciousness. His last words were: 'Give my love to my wife and children.' Then, after a few gasps, one or two convulsive twitches, his eyes now glassy, he breathed his last. That was about a quarter to four in the afternoon. The death agony lasted at most five minutes."

The result of the examination by two doctors of the Chancellor's body was: One bullet passed through the Chancellor's neck at its base above the left shoulder and issued at the nape of the neck. The wound was not of an absolutely fatal nature, but as the spinal cord was injured paralysis of both arms would, it must be assumed, have followed. A second shot pierced the right shoulder; and was also not absolutely deadly. The conclusion is therefore warranted that the Chancellor's death resulted from loss of blood. Had the murderers not wished

Dollfuss's death, there would have been a possibility, even after the two shots had been fired, of saving his life.

At about the same time as the 144 rebels penetrated the Chancellery, another group of National-Socialists tried to seize the building of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation in the Johannesgasse. In quick succession they overpowered the sentries stationed at the main entrance, burst into all the rooms, disarmed and arrested everybody present, seized the microphone and, over the Austrian wave-length, sent out a message to the effect that the Austrian Government had resigned and that Dr. Rintelen had charged himself with the formation of a new Cabinet. At the very moment this message was broadcast, the Putschists broke into the Chancellery. Since the rest of the Cabinet had assembled at the War Ministry, strong military and police forces could be despatched at once to the Broadcasting House, where they were involved in a regular battle. The wireless programme was switched off so that listeners would not hear what was going on near the microphone. Fighting in the Johannesgasse lasted until 3.45 P.M. when the authorities had succeeded in clearing the building completely of the rebels. Four dead and a number of gravely wounded remained on the battlefield.

A third attempt to seize power was made at the same time in Innsbruck. The Police President of Innsbruck was shot and killed by a National-Socialist, but the police were not long in mastering the situation, the murderer was arrested and was later executed.

Meanwhile the rebels on the Ballhausplatz had been forced to the conclusion that their game was up. The entire square of the Federal Chancellery was encircled by troops and police, but the Rump Government at the War Ministry hesitated to order the building to be stormed, as they feared that the rebels inside the Chancellery would then kill their hostages. At that time it was still unknown at the War Ministry that Dr. Dollfuss had been wounded and was, in fact, already dead. After repeated attempts to get into touch with either Fey or Dollfuss, Dr. Neustaedter-Stuermer, Secretary of State, was charged with the

mission to proceed to the Ballhausplatz and to talk to the leaders of the rebellion. Meanwhile, however, the rebels themselves had realized that the *putsch* had failed and had appealed to the German Minister to Vienna, Dr. Rieth, to help them out of the mess. This move on their part suddenly made it obvious that the whole rebellion had been organized with the full knowledge of the official German authorities; otherwise no Austrian could have ever had the courage to ask for the intervention of a diplomatic representative of a foreign power. But evidence became still stronger: Herr Rieth was ready to intervene and presently appeared among the rebels at the Ballhausplatz. He tried to persuade the Austrian Rump Cabinet to grant the rebels safe-conduct under military escort to the German frontier, provided nothing had happened to those inside the Chancellery, that is, the hostages. After long deliberation the Rump Cabinet led by Dr. Schuschnigg—Prince Starhemberg, the Vice-Chancellor was on holiday in Venice, and Herr Miklas, the Federal President at his country house at the Woerthersee—declared their readiness to grant this demand. At 6 A.M. Dr. Neustaedter-Stuermer appeared at the Chancellery and handed the rebels an ultimatum with a time-limit of fifteen minutes, during which they were to surrender the building, otherwise troops and police would storm it. The rebels replied that they were ready to give up their arms. The process of disarming lasted for more than two hours, and it was only then that Dr. Neustaedter-Stuermer and the rest of the Government learned of the death of the Chancellor. The agreement for safe-conduct for the rebels having thus become invalid, they were arrested without exception and interned in the police barracks.

Only in the late hours of the evening Major Fey and Dr. Schuschnigg told the population over the wireless the sad news of Dr. Dollfuss's death, to which the people of Austria and, indeed, the whole world answered with an outcry of indignation and horror.

Dr. Rintelen had awaited the outcome of the rebellion at the Hotel Imperial. In the afternoon he was joined there by Dr. Funder, editor of the Government *Reichspost*, who had tried all day to find him. He was persuaded by Dr. Funder to accompany him to the War Ministry where he was to put himself at

the disposal of the Rump Cabinet. No one in Austria had given a single thought to the appointment of Dr. Rintelen to the Chancellorship, least of all Herr Miklas, the President, who had been in constant telephone communication with Dr. Schuschnigg and had actually entrusted him with provisional charge of the Government.

At the War Ministry Rintelen was left alone in a room, and a revolver was placed before him on a desk. It was assumed that he would follow the example of a high Austrian officer who, years ago, had been unmasked as a spy, and end his own life. Rintelen took the revolver but was careful not to kill himself. He was only wounded. He was immediately taken to hospital, and after a long and extremely revealing trial, was sentenced to fifteen years' hard labour. He was released on March 16, 1938, under the general amnesty, and we shall meet him again.

Once the rebels at the Chancellery had been disarmed and Broadcasting House was recaptured, quiet and order were quickly restored in Vienna. Altogether not more than 300 men had actively taken part in the Vienna Nazi revolt, a fact which allows certain conclusions to be drawn as to the actual strength of the Nazi movement in Vienna at that time. Later on a complete list of ministers was found who were to form Dr. Rintelen's cabinet. They were:

Federal Chancellor, Dr. ANTON RINTELEN.

Vice-Chancellor, Herr THEO HABICHT.

Propaganda, Herr FRAUENFELD.

National Defence, General WAGNER.

Army Inspector, Field-Marshal-Lieutenant BARDOLFF.

Foreign Affairs, Professor HUGELMANN.

Education, Professor GLEISPACH.

Agriculture, Herr WINKLER (former Vice-Chancellor).

Commerce, Herr APOLD, Director of the Alpine Montan Mining Co.

Finance, Herr SACHER, former editor of the National-Socialist *Deutsch-Oesterreichische Tageszeitung*.

Social Welfare, Herr NEUBACHER.

Of all these only Herr Neubacher, who was appointed Burgo-master of Vienna after Hitler's entry into Vienna, has formally denied that he had been designated for a ministerial post in Dr. Rintelen's Cabinet. Habicht and Frauenfeld were well-known Nazis, and none of the others ever so much as concealed their purely National-Socialist feelings, either at that time or afterwards.

The inglorious end of the Vienna uprising and the collapse of the much larger rebellion in the Federal Provinces a few days later were followed, on the part of the Reich Government, by the immediate recall of the German Minister to Vienna, Herr Rieth, and the definite removal of Herr Theo Habicht. Herr Rieth was succeeded by Herr Franz von Papen, former Reich Chancellor, whose duty it now was, after force had failed to be of any avail, to achieve, or at least further, the task of Austria's political amalgamation with the Reich by methods of diplomacy. Herr Hitler, in fact, did not lose a single day. Hardly had one plan proved to be a failure, than he was ready with another.

Since the leaders of the Vienna rebellion had all been arrested, with the exception of a few wire-pullers who had managed to escape across the German frontier, the National-Socialist groups in the provinces were leaderless and had lost contact with their Viennese headquarters. In many parts of Austria the abortive result of the Vienna *putsch* only became known to the local Nazi organizations when they had already opened the attack. Owing to the fatal misunderstanding about the signal of the *putsch*, they had assembled and armed their men only in the course of the day of July 25, and the local uprisings in the provinces were thus a whole day behind the Viennese events. On July 26, 1934, rebellions broke out in Upper Styria and parts of the Upper Austrian frontier districts, followed by uprisings in Carinthia on the night of July 26 and on July 27.

In all these places heavily armed groups of National-Socialists, sometimes numbering several thousand, occupied the *gendarmie* posts, the Government buildings, and even whole stretches

of territory. The main centres of the rebellion were in the region of the Erzberg in Styria (the great mining district of the Alpine Montan Company), Leobean, Kapfenberg, Bruck, Selzthal, Pyhrnpass, parts of the Salzkammergut region such as Aussee, Liezen, and Woerschach and practically the whole of Carinthia. In that province bitter and protracted fighting took place at Klagenfurt, Wolfsberg, Voelkermarkt, Villach, St. Veit on the Glan, Spittal, round the Feldsee, the Carinthian Lake District, in the Lavanttal and Drautal. Without exception large contingents of regular troops interspersed with detachments of the Heimwehr and the Ostmaerkische Sturmsharen (Dr. Schuschnigg's own organization) had to be brought into action in order to relieve the heavily besieged *gendarmerie* Battalions, lasting in some places several days, ensued, the National Socialists as well as the Government forces using machine-gun and automatic pistols. The troops were even at times forced to use their heavy artillery, so stiff was the Nazi resistance. Casualties on the Government side were 110 dead and about 250 wounded, while the National-Socialists suffered losses of 200 dead and about 500 wounded.

The Austrian Legion, on their part, stood by at the Bavarian frontier ready to march in, in accordance with the National Socialist plan for a concentric attack on the whole of Austria. The attack was to be made from all sides simultaneously, in order to paralyse the Government forces from the outset. But this plan of the Munich party leaders never came off. The Austrian Legion had no chance even to march. On the very day the coup against Dollfuss had become known in Italy, six divisions of the Italian Army were immediately mobilized, and the army corps of Trieste, Verona and Trentino despatched to the frontiers of Tyrol and Carinthia. Mussolini duly fulfilled his promise to stand by Austria the moment a National-Socialist *putsch* was attempted. Consequently Herr Hitler had to recall the Austrian Legion from the Bavarian frontier, and it was subsequently sent via Berlin to East Prussia.

On July 26, the day after Dollfuss's assassination, the Austrian Government had issued the following *communiqué*:

"From the first announcement of the assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss, that is to say, at four o'clock on July 25, to guard

against eventual complications, orders were given for the movement of armed troops of the Army and Air Force towards the frontiers of the Brenner and Carinthia. Such forces are sufficient to deal with any eventuality. Although the situation in Austria appears to be returning to normal, it is nevertheless not permissible to think that such precautionary measures have become redundant."

The day before, on July 25, 1934, the Austrian Government had received the following long telegram from Signor Mussolini:

"The tragic death of Chancellor Dollfuss fills me with profound grief. Bound to him by ties of personal friendship and by common political views, I have always admired his virtues as a statesman, his upright simplicity, his great courage. The independence of Austria for which he has fallen is a principle which has been defended and will be defended by Italy still more strenuously in times of exceptional difficulty. Chancellor Dollfuss served the people from which he sprang with complete disinterestedness and disdain of danger. His memory will be honoured not only in Austria but everywhere in the civilized world, which has already visited its moral condemnation upon the guilty, both those directly responsible and those involved from afar. Accept the expression of my condolences which interpret the unanimous feeling of execration and sorrow of the Italian people."

The divisions despatched by Mussolini to the Austrian frontier, had a total strength of about 200,000 men. It was probably due to the mere fact of their armed presence that Herr Hitler had to abandon, at least for the time being, all thoughts of a march into Austria.

Carinthian Interlude

THOSE CRITICAL days of July 1934 I did not spend in Vienna, but was on holiday with my family on one of the lakes of Carinthia, the warmest and most southern of Austria's provinces, a region which incidentally, besides Upper Styria, had come to be regarded as one of the strongholds of National-Socialism.

It is a curious country, this part of Carinthia, an entirely Catholic region interspersed with a number of staunchly Protestant enclaves. Several hundred years ago Lutheran refugees from Northern Germany had settled there, round Spital on the river Drau; their descendants, still strongly adhering to their old faith, and opposed to that extent to the rest of the Catholic population, had now become an easy prey to National-Socialist doctrines. Bomb outrages had frequently been committed in this region during the preceding months; thus differences between the patriotic and Catholic section of the population and the Protestant National-Socialist section had become sharper, and feeling was running high.

The lake itself lies at the bottom of a deep valley, a situation particularly unfavourable for wireless reception, and the Vienna transmitter could only be heard with very strong sets, of which there were hardly any in the village. Besides, during those hot summer days, no one thought of listening to the wireless, everybody being fully occupied with swimming, tennis and mountaineering.

On the evening of July 25, when we had just sat down for supper, someone entered the room and said something was up in Vienna. Rumours were current in the village that the entire Government had been taken prisoner by the National-Socialists in front of the Parliament House, but concrete details were not known. I believe rumours like this were typical. Large sections of the population were quite uninformed, and it was

impossible to form an exact picture of what was actually going on. I rose at once and hurried to the post office to make a telephone call to Vienna. But I had forgotten that country post-offices in Austria close at six o'clock, and that it was impossible to telephone after that hour. I hurried on to the *gendarmerie* post where I found in charge the officer whom I had known from earlier summer holidays. He told me what he knew. It was little enough. He had received orders from his commander at Villach to stand by and to enlist four or five reliable peasants as auxiliary police. Something had happened in Vienna, the commander had told him, but what it was he had refused to say. That was all there was to learn.

Next morning everybody waited excitedly for the arrival of the newspapers. But they did not come. I borrowed a bicycle and rode down to the railway station at Spital. There I learned some of the facts: Dollfuss had been assassinated, Schuschnigg was in charge of the Government, there was a National-Socialist uprising in Styria, and railway connexions with Vienna had been interrupted at an unknown point somewhere between Bruck on the Mur and Knittelfeld. A roundabout journey through Yugoslavia was still possible, and the only way to reach Vienna. Newspapers had therefore not reached us, and neither had the mail.

I cycled back to our village and was stopped half-way by peasants and holidaymakers anxious to learn what I knew. I told them. Never shall I forget the expression of horror and exasperation on their faces. Curiously enough, none of those people whom we had known to have particularly strong National-Socialist feelings were around. In the course of the day the *gendarmerie* received new instructions. There was news that similar National-Socialist rebellions had broken out in different parts of Carinthia. Panic instantly spread among the holiday-makers, but there was no chance of leaving since there were no train connexions with the northern parts of Austria. Telephone communication with Vienna was interrupted as well. It remained impossible to learn what had actually happened in Vienna. Nevertheless the rest of the day at the little village passed quiet and undisturbed.

Next morning at 5.50 A.M. I was suddenly woken up by the fierce howling of a powerful siren. It was a terrific noise, shrill and shrieking. My little son ran into the room asking anxiously what was the matter. We had taken rooms in a villa on the mountain slope above the village, beneath the house was the tennis court, and it was easy to survey the whole village and its neighbourhood from our windows.

I told the boy that it was probably the fire siren, and that a fire must have broken out in the village. We opened the wooden shutters and looked out to see where the fire was. At that moment, less than ten yards from us, shots rang out. And in the next few seconds hell broke loose all round us—at first the irregular rattling of rifle fire, then suddenly the hollow sound of machine pistols, and finally the clatter of the machine guns, the whole thing taking place at a distance of about 20 yards round our house. I was just going to close the shutters when I heard the first bullets crackle through the windows of the adjoining room. It was the room where the child had been sleeping only a few minutes before.

"Lie down flat on the floor and don't lift your heads!" I told my wife and the boy. We thrust ourselves on the ground.

A rain of bullets pattered against the walls of the house, fragments of bricks and mortar flew through the air, outside suddenly a tremendous yelling and howling arose, trumpet signals, the desperate groans of the wounded, all amid the constant spatter of machine-guns. We had no idea what was actually going on. It was impossible to look out. The moment a head appeared at the window it would have been hailed by a rain of bullets. Later on we learned that our villa formed actually the very centre of the battle; both parties were under the assumption that the enemy had lodged himself in our lonely villa and was firing from it, which had made us the target for rifle and machine-gun fire from both sides.

Crawling across the floor we gradually managed to reach the staircase, where the rest of the inhabitants had gathered. Women and children were taken to the cellar where they would be comparatively safe, and the men decided to find out what was actually going on. Suddenly someone knocked at the back door of the house, and when the door was opened, a soldier

slipped in. He was slightly wounded and asked for water and bandages which, still crawling across the floor, we managed to get for him. He told us what had happened.

During the night of July 26 National-Socialist sympathizers of the whole region had assembled at Radenthein and had been supplied with arms. Radenthein was a big magnesite works employing several hundred workers, most of whom were National-Socialists. Towards midnight they had set out in a large number of motor lorries to occupy the whole lake district. They were between 500 and 600 men altogether, and had occupied all villages between Villach and Spital and arrested all *gendarmerie* posts. One of the *gendarmes* had, however, been able, before his post was occupied, to send out alarm and warning signals to the other posts in his neighbourhood. Those posts thereupon had tried to stop the National-Socialist motor lorries from proceeding by hurriedly erecting barricades across the roads. Round these barricades the first fighting had broken out between the *gendarmes* and the rebels, but the Nazis having equipped their first lorry with a machine-gun and the *gendarmes* having only their rifles and pistols, the latter had been forced to surrender after heavy casualties. The rebels drove out in haste through the night, occupying one village after the other.

Besides the *gendarmerie* the Army commands at Villach and Spital had been warned of the incidents. One battalion of the Federal Army, reinforced by one company each of Heimwehr and Ostmaerkische Sturmscharen, had immediately been mobilized and succeeded in restoring order during the night at several villages in the Drau valley. On account of the news that the rebels were marching up from Radenthein, the troops had been hurriedly packed into motor trucks and coaches and dispatched towards Radenthein, to stop the rebels on their way. Just in front of our house the two armies had met. When the National-Socialists learned that the Army were on their way they barricaded themselves on the high slopes above the road along which the troops were bound to come. The first coaches with regular troops having come into sight, the fire siren had been blown as the signal for the opening of the battle. There were about 600 Nazis opposing some 300 troops,

but, the latter being superior in training and armament, as well as more courageous, the Nazis gradually lost ground.

The battle round our house lasted for more than three hours, until rifle and machine-gun fire gradually diminished; fighting seemed to recede more towards the village and the mountains, and after a while it became possible to have a cautious peep out of the window. The sight was horrible enough. Four dead and a number of gravely wounded were lying on the ground; trees were shot to matchwood; bricks, mortar, shell splinters covered the field, and patrols were busy cleaning up the area and searching for the dead and wounded. We volunteered to help, and assisted where we could; soon afterwards the army ambulances arrived and took the victims away.

Shortly afterwards a plain and simple murder was committed in our immediate neighbourhood. Its cold-blooded ruthlessness enraged the villagers perhaps even more than the whole of the preceding battle. The local commander of the Heimwehr was Freiherr Seutter von Loetzen, a young and particularly good-looking man, who was fiercely hated by the National-Socialists and had displayed exceptional courage during the morning's battle. Towards 10 A.M. an order from his commanding officer, written on a slip of paper, was brought into his guard-room requesting him to come at once to a certain and rather dangerous point at the other side of the high road. Without a moment's hesitation Freiherr von Loetzen obeyed, and just as he was stepping forward from a covering tree on to the road, three shots fired from an ambush killed him on the spot. The order from the commanding officer, it was proved later, had been forged by the National-Socialists, and he had walked into the trap.

Those National-Socialists who had escaped the battle unwounded had sought refuge in distant houses and the surrounding woods, whence they carried on a sort of guerrilla warfare. For several days shots could still be heard occasionally in the woods and mountain regions, whenever the military and Heimwehr search patrols came across isolated National-Socialists who resisted arrest. A week after the big battle, while

walking along an out-of-the-way mountain pass. I met an old peasant woman plodding up the steep path, carrying a basket with food for her son who was still hiding at a secret place high up in the rocks. Her husband and she herself, as well as their elder son, had always been good Austrian patriots, but her younger son was a National-Socialist body and soul. Long and heated arguments had been going on for a long time in the family, until on the night of July 26, the younger son had received word to put on his Storm Trooper's uniform, to take his rifle and to join his fellow comrades. Next day he had secretly sent word, through his girl, where he was in hiding, and had asked them to send him food.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" the old woman said. "What else can I do? I can't let him get arrested, or leave him to starve. So I have to go up there every day."

Her husband and her elder son, she said, had strictly refused to help the "traitor".

One after the other, the greater part of the rebels were gradually caught and arrested. They were without exception young men of between seventeen and twenty-one years of age, mostly second and third sons of peasants who could not hope to inherit one day their father's farm. But there was also a good number of students and sons of civil servants among them. The Government made a neat job of it. Innumerable arrests were made, houses searched, and every one questioned thoroughly; which led, within a remarkably short time, to a complete disclosure of the whole network of the National-Socialist organization. More than 1900 National-Socialists from Carinthia had escaped across the border into Yugoslavia, thus diminishing considerably the number of their remaining comrades. Besides enormous quantities of propaganda material and secret wireless sets, there had been found in the searched houses complete lists of all members of the party who had done illegal work. It therefore became relatively easy to dissolve all their organizations, not only in Carinthia but throughout Austria, to destroy their connexions and communications, and to suppress completely all the "cells" which had hitherto existed.

The failure of the July Rebellion led to a complete standstill of all illegal National-Socialist activity in Austria for many months to come. It was only after long and most strenuous reorganization, again mainly directed from Germany, that the Nazi party succeeded, during 1936, gradually in establishing a new network of "party cells", which were in most cases run by new members.

The period from July 1934 to the middle of 1936 was thus actually one of the most quiet and peaceful Austria had enjoyed since the War, and generally the feeling had come to reign that at least for the time being another outbreak of disorder and a resurrection of the National-Socialist movement need not be feared.

But Herr Hitler was not the man to give up. The stronger the resistance of the Austrian Government became, the more determined he became to achieve final recognition in the land of his birth. Bribes and blackmail, terrorism, vituperation and slander, even open armed rebellion, had not helped to bring him nearer to his aim.

Again a new method had to be tried.

Political pressure began.

Herr Hitler "Guarantees" Austria's Independence

PROBABLY THE mobilization of the Italian Northern Army at the Brenner frontier gave Herr Hitler more cause for reflection than anything else, certainly more than the collapse of the National-Socialist *putsch* in Austria. From the very beginning he had realized that, to change the political constellation of Europe, an agreement between Germany and Italy was of cardinal importance. The results, however, of repeated negotiations between Berlin and Rome only convinced the German Foreign Office of Signor Mussolini's determination to safeguard the independence of Austria; and in view of this Herr Hitler took the step of declaring in his great speech before the German Reichstag on May 21, 1935:

"That Germany neither intended nor wished to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria, nor to annex Austria, nor to conclude an Anschluss."

He concluded his reference to Austria categorically thus:

"The German Government regrets the tension which has arisen from the conflict with Austria all the more inasmuch as it has disturbed our relations, formerly so friendly, with Italy, a State with whom we otherwise have no conflict of interest."

The mere wording of these references seemed tantamount to a proclamation before the world that Hitler recognized and respected Austria's independence, if only for one single reason—the avoidance for the future of every possible cause of friction with the Italian Government.

For the time being this declaration was sufficient to satisfy the Italian Government. When, however, after the Ethiopian war and at the beginning of the Civil War in Spain, Signor Mussolini was dependent upon a substantial relief from responsibility in Central Europe, the well-known agreement of

July 11, 1936, between Germany and Austria came into being, in which it was declared:

"Convinced that they are thereby rendering a valuable contribution towards the peaceful development of Europe, and believing that they are thereby rendering the best service to the various common interests of the two German States, the Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Austrian Federal States have decided to restore normal and friendly mutual relations;

"It is therefore declared:

(1). *In the sense of the statement made by the Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor on May 21, 1935, the German Government recognizes the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria;*

(2). *Each of these two Governments shall regard the internal political conditions of the other country, including the question of Austrian National-Socialism, as a domestic concern of that country, upon which it will exert neither direct nor indirect influence;*

(3). *The general policy of the Government of the Austrian Federal State and its policy towards Germany in particular shall be constantly guided by the principle that Austria recognizes herself to be a German State. The Rome Protocol of 1934, together with the additional clauses of 1936, and the relations of Austria with Italy and Hungary as partners in the said protocol, are not hereby affected."*

I have purposely introduced at this point the most important declarations made by Herr Hitler and the Government of the Reich before giving an account of the political developments which led up to them during the intervening period of from July 1934 till July 1936; as I shall require to refer to them. Logically speaking, the recognition of Austria's independence and sovereignty was the immediate consequence of Italy's attitude towards Austria during the critical days of July 1934. But a brief outline of the most important developments in the interval and the foreign policy of Austria, Italy and Germany during those two years is essential to explain other bearings.

These were the main developments:

- (1). The Ethiopian War and Sanctions.
- (2). The widening of the Rome Protocols.
- (3). Negotiations for a new Danube Pact.
- (4). Propaganda for a Habsburg restoration in Austria.
- (5). The Saar Plebiscite and the Occupation of the Rhineland.
- (6). The suppression of the "Heimwehr" and the re-introduction of conscription in Austria.
- (7). Further checks to National-Socialism in Austria.

Early in January 1935 a meeting took place in Rome between Signor Mussolini and M. Laval, the French Foreign Minister, followed by several days' conferences. After the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and M. Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, at Marseilles, tension between Yugoslavia and France on the one hand and between Yugoslavia and Italy on the other, had become so aggravated that at times the outbreak of a conflict in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean seemed inevitable. But since Italy's attention at that time had already become directed more towards the realization of her colonial ambitions in East Africa than towards preparing for a trial of strength in the Adriatic, she welcomed frank conversations with France. These conversations resulted, on January 7, 1935, in an agreement between Signor Mussolini and M. Laval, which not only settled differences about the Marseilles assassination but also brought a clear definition of respective French and Italian spheres of interest in the Mediterranean as well as in Africa. While the Mussolini-Laval Agreement was concluded with the knowledge and approval of Great Britain, it seems doubtful whether it was fully realized in London at that time how far-reaching Signor Mussolini's plans in Africa were. At any rate, for Italy the door to Abyssinia had been opened. After most careful military and economic preparations the Italian army, at the beginning of October 1935, set out to march into the Negus's empire.

But earlier than that Great Britain's strong disapproval of the Italian adventure in Africa had become unmistakable, and on November 10, 1935, Italy was faced with the imposition of economic sanctions by the League of Nations, of which

Abyssinia was a member. Three States, however, did not join in the economic blockade against Italy: Germany, Austria, and Hungary. Germany had already on a previous occasion left the League and striven, at whatever cost, to come to an understanding with Italy. Austria and Hungary were already so closely tied to Signor Mussolini by the Rome Protocols that they found it safer, for the sake of this pact, to refuse participation in the sanctions policy.

The fact that these three States maintained their trade with Italy proved to be of great value to Signor Mussolini in the course of his war. Soon, however, it became apparent that the military successes of Italy's troops in Africa and the sudden abdication of the Negus meant hardly more than a Pyrrhic victory. In spite of having taken Addis Ababa, Italy was obliged to send more and more troops to Abyssinia to keep the not yet pacified tribes in south-eastern Ethiopia under control, and what was more, the cost of the war, both in capital and in raw materials, had drained Italy and thrown her economic life into disorder. Financial help for Italy appeared to be all the more urgent to meet the costs of the Italian adventure in Spain.

The Italo-Austro-German situation thus became reversed. Before the Ethiopian war Italy had been able to concentrate diplomatically upon her hold over Central Europe and to enjoy the advantages of close economic co-operation with Austria and Hungary. But her victory in Ethiopia cost her that grip over the Central European nexus. A more intimate collaboration with Germany became to her imperative, but that could only be brought about by a removal of the Austro-German tension. Germany was at the same time eager to win back Italy's friendship and diplomatic collaboration, and it is in this light that we must understand Herr Hitler's half-hearted declaration of May 21, 1935, followed by the much more decisive agreement of July 11, 1936, as clever strokes in a well-planned foreign policy.

The Rome Protocols, signed before the death of Dollfuss by Italy, Austria, and Hungary, were concluded with the purpose of creating, through a closer economic co-operation among

these States, something in the nature of a new political block in Central Europe, which was to serve as a counter-weight to the Little Entente, composed of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. The possibility of adherence by other States to the Pact was left open, and Germany and Bulgaria were envisaged by Mussolini as possible additional signatories, since both these States had already taken the first step towards a policy of closer friendship with Italy. Immediately after the crushing of the revolt of July 1934, Dr. Schuschnigg went to Rome, to repeat the journey in November of the same year; and on May 5, 1935, three new agreements were signed in Venice which implemented the original Rome Pact and contained, besides economic measures, provisions also for closer military co-operation between the signatory States. On May 8, 1935, Dr. Schuschnigg proceeded to Florence, where preliminaries for a re-introduction of conscription and general rearmament in Austria were discussed between himself and Signor Mussolini. These conversations were followed during the rest of that year and the first six months of 1936 by a further study of the most important conditions for a *rapprochement* between the Rome Pact Powers and the Little Entente, and the foundation for an understanding between Italy and Yugoslavia was thus laid.

Up to 1935 relations between the Rome Pact Powers and the Little Entente had been thoroughly unsatisfactory, and could, in fact, have hardly been worse. Settlement of a number of open conflicts between Italy and Yugoslavia, concerning mainly the Adriatic, Albania, Croatia and the Yugoslav refugees in Italy, had been still outstanding. Like Czechoslovakia and Rumania, Yugoslavia had participated in the League's sanctions policy against Italy, and the outbreak of an armed conflict in the Adriatic had for a long time seemed almost inevitable. On the other hand there had been open conflicts between Hungary and the Little Entente states, Hungary having been obliged, under the peace treaties, to cede large parts of her original territory to the three Little Entente powers, which she insisted on reclaiming. Irredentist Croat movements had been operating from Hungary against Belgrade, and the oppression of

Hungarian nationalist elements in Slovakia, Siebenbuergen, and the Banat had led on many occasions to an exchange of strong diplomatic protests between Budapest, Prague, Belgrade, and Bukarest. Comparatively, the least strained relations existed between Austria and her two neighbours, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. To relax tension all round, mediation was urgently needed, and Dr. Schuschnigg seemed to be the right man to try his hand at a *rapprochement* between the Rome Pact States and the Little Entente.

His first step was a journey to Prague, on January 17, 1936, where conversations with Dr. Hodza, the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, resulted in the latter's readiness to collaborate with Dr. Schuschnigg in his endeavours to bring about an understanding with the Rome Pact States. During the following period hardly a month went by without Dr. Schuschnigg and Dr. Hodza pursuing, in more conversations, their project of a joint policy in Central Europe. Not only did Austria herself feel her further existence threatened by the growing strength of the German armed forces, but Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Hungary were equally eager to safeguard themselves, through some closer union, against Germany's political and economic aspirations, and all these considerations helped to speed matters up. Towards the middle of January 1936 the idea of a Danubian Federation or Union was mentioned for the first time, and became known as the "Danube Plan". Its main idea was to unite all those territories which until 1918 had belonged to the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy—that is, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania into one economic group, which was to be enlarged by Italy, Bulgaria, and possibly Poland. Following the example of the Rome Pact and the Little Entente, customs preferences and duty allowances were to be introduced between all these States, tourist and currency restrictions were to be alleviated, new industries were to be created, and the exchange of goods was to be facilitated by means of premium payments on the basis already existing between Italy and Austria. Such an economic agreement would have resulted further in a political and military *rapprochement* along the lines of the Rome Pact.

Little enough enthusiasm for such a plan was felt in Ger-

many. The Reich Government's first reaction was to demand Germany's inclusion in the Danube Plan. But Germany's policy of self-sufficiency was already far too strict, her economic frontiers too neatly closed and her autarchy far too highly developed for it to be easy for her to mould herself within such a framework. Her demand for inclusion consequently evoked little interest. Berlin diplomacy therefore set to work to negotiate with each individual State in the proposed block, with the distinct aim of getting a German foothold in each country, eventually to counter the effects of the Danube Federation. Germany's attempts met with considerable success in Bulgaria, and were not entirely fruitless in Yugoslavia and Hungary. On March 11, 1936, a non-aggression pact was offered by Germany to Czechoslovakia and Austria, but apparently without any serious intentions, since it was quite forgotten a few days later. Finally, Germany lodged a formal protest against the Danube Pact in terms as strong as those in which she had objected to any attempts to restore the Habsburgs on the throne of Austria.

Austria's own monarchist tendencies not only were disliked in Germany but also obstructed the progress of negotiations for the Danube Plan. Besides Germany, the States of the Little Entente, particularly Yugoslavia and Rumania, feared very rightly that if Archduke Otto were allowed to return to his throne in Austria, the successful creation of a Danube Federation would only serve as a stepping-stone to the resurrection of the monarchy in its old form, or would at least mean the beginning of a strong movement of secession in Slovakia, Croatia, Siebenbuergen, and the Banat.

In Austria the monarchist idea had gradually regained strength after the collapse and the expulsion of the Emperor Charles I. In Vienna the former chief of the Prime Minister's Press Department during the old monarchy, Baron von Wiesner, acted as representative and spokesman of the Habsburg family. A diplomat of the old school, he never hurried anything but made use of every opportunity, however small, as it came to advance and strengthen gradually the monarchist idea among the Austrian people.

Until the fateful February of 1934 the idea of a Habsburg restoration had its most bitter enemies in the Austrian Socialists. Although Baron Wiesner repeatedly declared that, in the case of a return of Archduke Otto, neither the recreation of an empire nor even a kingdom was contemplated, but that the Archduke would come back at the most as a *Landesfürst* (Ruling Prince), the Social Democrats were not willing to consider anything which would have entailed the abolishment of the republican form of the constitution.

Dr. Dollfuss was no convinced supporter of the monarchist idea. Dr. Schuschnigg, however, never concealed his deep and certainly genuine affection for the old Imperial house; and he repeatedly declared that in his view the treatment of the Habsburg family in 1918 was a crying injustice which he would try to repair as far as possible.

After the defeat of the Social Democrats in February 1934, and when five months later Dr. Schuschnigg formed a Government, the moment consequently came for the Monarchists to work for a gradual furtherance of their plans. They proceeded very slowly—probably too slowly from the point of view of saving Austria herself. It is, of course, impossible to say with certainty whether the restoration of the Habsburgs had any prospects of succeeding before March 11, 1938, and whether Austria herself and peace in Central Europe as a whole would have benefited from a return of Archduke Otto. But what is true is that after the destruction of social democracy and the elimination of the *Heimwehr*, the monarchist idea was undoubtedly the strongest of all movements against National-Socialism.

Prince Otto—or “Emperor Otto” as he was called in monarchist circles in Austria after the death of his father, Emperor Charles—lived at Castle Steenockerzeel, in Belgium, together with his mother, the ex-Empress Zita, and his numerous brothers and sisters. According to post-War laws in Austria entry into Austrian territory was forbidden to all members of the former Imperial family. The entire fortunes of the Habsburgs had been confiscated to the benefit of the State and the war invalids’ organizations.

The primary aim of the Monarchists was therefore to win

back these properties from the State and to obtain a lifting of the ban against the Habsburg family. In both they were successful within a surprisingly short period. On July 10, 1935, the so-called Habsburg Laws were promulgated, which made it possible for the members of the Imperial family to return to Austria, and during the same year lawful foundations were laid for an eventual return of their property, which was in fact returned to them towards the end of 1937.

In order not to alarm public opinion abroad at first only Archduke Eugen returned to Austria, where he enjoyed enormous popularity with all sections of the population. So great was his popularity that there was even a time when Monarchist as well as Catholic circles seriously considered electing the old Archduke President of the Federal State in the place of President Miklas, or at least making him Regent, like Horthy in Hungary. This plan was frustrated by strong objections on the parts of France and the Little Entente, who regarded such a move as merely the thin end of the wedge of monarchy. The idea had to be abandoned, and President Miklas was re-elected. The Monarchists' next step was to bring back to Austria, one by one, other members of the Imperial family. The next to arrive was Archduchess Adelheid, Otto's sister, who however revealed herself to be far too shy and too unimportant a figure in every respect to be of any propagandist value. Thereupon Otto's younger brother, Archduke Felix, was brought to Austria to study at the military academy of Wiener Neustadt, but he too never became in the slightest way important in Austrian political life. Both Adelheid and Felix had the greatest difficulty in escaping across the Hungarian border on March 11, 1938, and both are now back in Steenockerzeel.

The moves made by Archduke Otto himself, under the guidance of Baron Wiesner, were far more important and more effective. The little town of Axams, near Innsbruck, was the first in Austria to make Otto an "honorary citizen". The Archduke replied with a personal letter to the people of Axams, and made a custom of replying thus personally while gradually, through Wiesner's persistent efforts, more and more towns and villages conferred the title of Honorary Citizen on both Otto and Archduke Eugen. In September 1935 as many as one

thousand Austrian communities had followed the example of Axams, and Otto made this an occasion for issuing a message from Steenockerzeel Castle, on September 19, 1935, remarkable for its hopeful and confident tone.

"The people [the message runs] have learned to trust in their future again now that the foundation-stones of a new Austria have been found in the ruins of the old Austria. There, too, is to be found the Crown which no Habsburg yet has ever regarded as a vain bauble, and which indeed for many a Habsburg has proved a crown of thorns. Such may well be my lot also, if the wish of the people for the restoration of the Monarchy is fulfilled. I could not withhold myself from it, for to be the advocate of the Austrian people is a duty for the heir of the Martyr-Emperor. This duty must be fulfilled, even though it demands heavy sacrifices from the wearer of the crown. I would make those sacrifices myself just as did my dearly-loved father, believing in God's will and confiding in the people. By this confidence I shall not be disappointed. The proofs of love and devotion which reach me, the exile, tell me that I may count on all who feel and think as Austrians."

When the twenty-third birthday of the Archduke was publicly celebrated in Vienna on November 20, 1935, for the first time not only was Archduke Eugen present but also Vice-Chancellor Fey and Dr. Schuschnigg, a fact which gave the whole celebration an entirely new importance. Already during the summer of 1935 the Little Entente States had made an official *démarche* in Vienna and asked for information concerning the development of the Habsburg question. Following Dr. Schuschnigg's presence at the birthday celebrations, this *démarche* was repeated in December 1935. Dr. Schuschnigg replied in the most widely reassuring of terms. Rumour also had it during that time that Prince Starhemberg had been designated Regent of Austria and temporary protector of the throne for the Habsburg family, but this and similar rumours were energetically refuted by Schuschnigg.

On January 19, 1936, when the wave of monarchist sympathies had undoubtedly reached its height, both Dr. Schuschnigg and Prince Starhemberg, in speeches made at the Vienna

of war trumpets, were in fact the first signs of the formation of the Rome-Berlin axis, a political combination which was to exercise the most decisive influence on the political development of the entire world in the years to come.

But Herr Hitler was not satisfied with having won Italy as an ally; he simultaneously took steps to further his political aims in Eastern Europe. A period of most lively diplomatic activity between Berlin, Warsaw, and Budapest began, aiming at no less than the formation of a German-Polish-Hungarian block. This block was to serve a twofold purpose: in the first place, it was to drive a wedge between the Rome Pact Powers and the Little Entente, to hamper their *rapprochement* and to sabotage the Danube Plan; in the second place, it was hoped by it to isolate Austria. The foundations of the Rome-Berlin axis having been laid, it was essential to draw Hungary, Austria's other close ally, into the orbit of German interests. The Hungarian Prime Minister at that time was General Goemboes, originally a leader of the Hungarian racialist movement, a man who had warm sympathies for National Socialism and was striving himself to establish a personal dictatorship in Hungary. Several journeys which Goemboes made to Germany, visits of German ministers in Hungary, a direct diplomatic exchange of views between Budapest and Warsaw, and visits of ministers in the three respective capitals seemed to bring the German plan quickly near to its realization; it was moreover greatly helped by the fact that Goemboes for purely egoistic reasons, was a stern opponent of a restoration of the Habsburgs and was content, in view of the growing monarchist movement in Austria, to find Germany ready to cover his rear.

Meanwhile the reorganization of the National-Socialist movement was all but neglected in Berlin. It was a difficult task, and patience and extreme cautiousness were required to put the organization, after its destruction in July 1934, back on its feet. Herr von Papen was certainly the right man for this job. During the war in America, and later in Germany and at the Vatican, he had given ample proof of his ability to disentangle the most difficult situations. Profoundly erudite, a convincing speaker, a well-mannered gentleman with a particular winning charm of his own, he not only possesses a

shrewd diplomatic sense but also the mixture of unscrupulousness and inconsiderateness, of plain opportunism, and of sly cunning necessary to master apparently completely insoluble problems. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that it was he who smuggled Austria into Herr Hitler's hands, who prepared and arranged the fateful meeting at Berchtesgaden and thereby made Herr Hitler the ruler of Vienna, just as five years previously he had made him the ruler of Germany.

Herr von Papen took his time. He was in no hurry to occupy his new post, and arrived in Vienna as late as August 1934. During the first half of November he made an extensive journey through Austria, a so-called "informative trip" which took him chiefly through Styria and Carinthia, where numerous conversations took place between the new German ambassador and local Nationalists. He explored the ground and laid the foundations for a new National-Socialist organization which henceforth kept in close contact with himself and his confidants. Simultaneously a new movement was created in the western provinces of Austria, mainly in Upper Austria and Salzburg, which became known as the *Nationalbetonten* (literally: the 'Accentuated Nationals'), under the leadership of Herr Reintaller, a civil engineer of Linz. Since the National-Socialist movement, legal or illegal, met with Dr. Schuschnigg's most uncompromising intolerance, and all its activities wherever they were attempted were ruthlessly suppressed, Herr Reintaller tried to secure the official co-operation of his Accentuated Nationals within the framework of the Patriotic Front, which was then quickly gaining strength. Months and months of difficult negotiations were finally crowned with success, and on February 25, 1935, the Accentuated Nationals were admitted into the Patriotic Front. The foundation was laid for the so-called *Volkspolitische Referat* (National Political Committee) which was to play a decisive part in the events of February and March 1938.

Apart from the activities of Herr von Papen and Herr Reintaller what was left of the former illegal movement also tried hard to get back into the news. The slogan of this group was simple and effective: "*Trotz Verbot—nicht tot*" ("Despite the ban—still alive"). During the Saar Plebiscite swastikas stamped

out of paper and bearing this slogan were for the first time strewn by the thousand in the streets of Vienna: demonstrations followed in the spring of 1935 in many Vienna cinemas, where groups of people among the audience would shout the slogan in chorus; on May 1, 1935, a large swastika flag was hoisted on the spire of the Votivkirche; and towards the end of May the Government was forced once again to resort to mass arrests throughout Austria of illegal National-Socialists who had made renewed attempts to demonstrate under their new slogan. A period of relative outward quiet followed, but inwardly, mainly in the western provinces, the Accentuated Nationals had set to work and displayed ceaseless activity within the Patriotic Front.

In the course of 1935, however, a deep rift became apparent which seemed to have split Austrian National-Socialist circles from top to bottom. Fierce opposition arose between the illegal National-Socialists and the Accentuated Nationals, each group fighting the other in the most bitter way and accusing the other of corruption, treason, and the like. This quarrel made it all the easier for the authorities to keep the different movements in check.

A remarkable strengthening of Austria's inner forces, an awakening in her whole national life, took place during the same period, a fact which accounts for much of Austria's ability to keep the pace of events during the following two years, and it was primarily due to Dr. Schuschnigg's personal attitude and convictions. Being much less a Fascist than Dollfuss, he realized that the country could in the long run hardly benefit from the activities of the Heimwehr in general and from men like Fey and Starhemberg in particular; on the other hand, he certainly disliked the idea of remaining everlastingly dependent upon Italy. This attitude of Schuschnigg's staved off a purely Fascist dictatorship in Austria, but just as distinctly it gradually cooled Mussolini's enthusiasm. From the very beginning Dr. Schuschnigg endeavoured to abandon a purely Fascist policy, or at least not to pursue it any further, and to substitute for it a genuinely Austrian idea, a truly patriotic movement. A return to monarchy seemed to him to

offer the best of all solutions to this end. His foreign policy arrived, at the same time, at a closer attachment not only to Italy but also to Hungary and to the Little Entente. To Signor Mussolini this policy was at the time very welcome; being himself out to win new friends and allies in Central Europe, Schuschnigg appeared to him to be the right man to establish contact with the Little Entente camp.

In order to counteract the predominance of Fascism in Austria, Schuschnigg had to begin with removing, step by step, the Heimwehr from the sphere of political influence. In this he succeeded with extraordinary diplomatic shrewdness. The first step was to exploit a momentary conflict between Fey and Starhemberg in such a way that it resulted, for one day, in excluding Fey from the Cabinet. A *coup d'état* by Fey's Vienna Heimwehr had been feared for that day, but all railway stations and public buildings had been swiftly occupied by the authorities before Fey's men had even been ready to assemble. The next step was to get rid of those Heimwehr units which were under the command of Starhemberg. To achieve this it was necessary to introduce conscription throughout Austria, a step in which Schuschnigg succeeded on April 1, 1936, without encountering any substantial resistance on the part of the other powers.

Only six weeks later Schuschnigg made his decisive stroke against Starhemberg. He decreed that, in view of conscription, all semi-military organizations in Austria were to be dissolved since there was no longer any reason for their existence. This decree was, of course, primarily directed against the Heimwehr, but it applied equally to Dr. Schuschnigg's own Ostmaerkische Sturmscharen, the Freiheitsbund, and the Christian Gymnastic League. The local leaders of the Heimwehr, refusing to obey the order of dissolution, Prince Starhemberg was forced on May 14, 1936, to draw the logical conclusions and to resign from the Vice-Chancellorship.

The circumstances in which these radical changes took place were highly dramatic. The Council of Ministers, which decided the Cabinet reshuffle, lasted until four o'clock in the morning. The formation of a so-called *Frontmiliz* (Front Militia) was decided upon to take the place of the former semi-military

organizations and to be placed under the direct command of the Federal Army. Dr. Schuschnigg emerged from the sitting as a victor all round. Prince Starhemberg, who until then had also held the post of "Front Leader" of the Patriotic Front, had to relinquish this office as well and grudgingly withdrew from political life without the Heimwehr making the least further difficulties.

Having thus become the sole ruler of Austria, Dr. Schuschnigg was able to count, at least for the time being, on the firm support of the army and the rest of the armed forces in the State.

One more factor must not be overlooked in this connexion: the remarkable improvement in Austria's economic position brought about during the same period.

Two internal loans had been successfully floated for the purpose of creating employment, all former debts had been consolidated, and the rate of interest lowered. A number of big national schemes were carried through, which contributed greatly to bringing new life to Austria's industries—the building of the new mountain road over the Glockner (one of the finest in Europe), the Packstrasse, and the since-famous Vienna Hoehenstrasse; enormous expenditure on armaments, the electrification of Austria's railways, and many other things. Foreign trade, furthermore, had benefited greatly since the outbreak of the Ethiopian war and Austria's refusal to join in sanctions, by the placing of big Italian orders in Austria. Trade balance showed an almost miraculous improvement, a stream of foreign tourists, mainly from France and England and steadily increasing, brought up to 200 million schillings into the country every year.

One grave mistake must, however, be mentioned here, which in the end became partly responsible for the fact that the National-Socialist movement again and again found Austria a fertile soil for its growth. Since the beginning of 1932 the President of the Austrian National Bank had been Dr. Kienboeck, an expert in currency policy of the old Liberal school, and a man of stupendous abilities. It was due to him that the Austrian schilling currency remained completely stable for the

last five years, that not only all Austrian payments to foreign countries could be made without the least restrictions, but that the "Alpine Dollar" (as the Austrian schilling was sometimes jokingly called) even became the favourite goal of a great deal of Central European flight capital. In order to safeguard the schilling and to guarantee the security of the currency far beyond any normal scope, Dr. Kienboeck refused steadfastly to deviate from his strict monetary policy, in spite of the effect such a change might have had on employment through the strengthening of public purchasing power. No one indeed in those years in Austria ever gave a thought to inflation, although the total circulation of 1,200 million schillings was by far too small to give scope for private initiative. Had the National Bank resolved, as far back as 1935 and 1936, to begin with a larger discount of bills and gradually to increase the circulation of treasury notes, it would have given employers a decided impetus and have absorbed a great number of unemployed on a much saner basis than obtained, by the same methods, in Germany. All attendant symptoms of a dwindling purchasing power, above all a decrease in general turnover, could have been avoided and a great deal of discontent could have been halted. The excessively high valuation of the schilling, although admired abroad, thus largely contributed to a growth of dissatisfaction among the unemployed who grew eventually to gigantic proportions, particularly among the country's youth. Dissatisfaction naturally drove them to National-Socialism, and National-Socialism took its revenge in March 1938. Looking back to-day it must be said that a relaxation of Dr. Kienboeck's all too strict deflation policy, if begun as early as 1935, would have certainly alleviated a great many political difficulties without endangering the stability of the currency.

Truce

THE AGREEMENT of July 11, 1936—the most important points of which have been mentioned at the beginning of the preceding chapter—was in many aspects a kind of truce between the two States. The first suggestion for its conclusion came, strange though it may seem, from Berlin, or, more precisely, from Herr von Papen, Germany's new ambassador in Vienna. Soon after the reconstruction of the Vienna Government in May 1936, from which Starhemberg had been excluded, Herr von Papen had gone to Berlin and proposed to his chiefs that a *modus vivendi* between Austria and Germany should be found. Dr. Schuschnigg at first went to Rome to inform Signor Mussolini of this new move, as well as of recent developments in Austria, including the disbanding of the Heimwehr. Strong pressure was thereupon brought to bear by Mussolini on Berlin as well as on Vienna, and both capitals were urged from Rome to come to such an agreement which, as was clearly foreseen in Rome, would result in granting Italy additional elbow-room in the Mediterranean and in relieving her of her continuous worry over an eventual open conflict between Austria and Germany. Germany on her side had no reason to refuse such an agreement, being just about to intervene together with Italy actively in the Spanish civil war. She knew full well too, that she would not need to feel compelled by any such agreement to renounce any of her ultimate claims on Austria. On the contrary, what was to be concluded was, in her eyes, not a peace treaty but merely a truce which could be made to last just as long as it was opportune. It lasted actually for eighteen months.

Fundamentally the aims pursued by Germany in the agreement of July 11 were the same as were finally realized by her in the conversation between Herr Hitler and Dr. Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden on February 12, 1938. By virtue of the July agreement, Dr. Edmund von Glaise-Horstenau, who was gener-

ally regarded as enjoying to a certain degree Herr Hitler's confidence, was admitted to the Cabinet as a minister without portfolio, and Dr. Guido Schmidt was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign affairs. The appointment of the new Foreign Minister having been made in connexion with the July agreement, large sections of Austrian public opinion could not help but feel that Dr. Schmidt must have special sympathies with National-Socialism. This view was repeatedly refuted by Dr. Schuschnigg himself, who had complete confidence in his Foreign Secretary. Yet it became more than obvious later on that Dr. Schuschnigg had been wrong and public opinion right. Dr. Schmidt had more than a strong leaning towards National Socialism, and it was not by mere accident that it was he and Herr von Papen who accompanied the Austrian Chancellor on his fateful journey to Berchtesgaden as his counsellors and companions.

The renewed recognition of Austria's independence and sovereignty by Herr Hitler in July 1936 was an indisputable success for Dr. Schuschnigg, all the more since the National-Socialist party remained forbidden and the ban on the wearing of the swastika emblem and the saluting in the Hitler fashion had not been lifted. In its more precise details the agreement stipulated the following principles:

"The German Government recognizes the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria.

"Each of the two Governments shall regard the internal political conditions of the other country, including the question of Austrian National Socialism, as a domestic concern of that country, upon which it will exert neither direct nor indirect influence.

"Austria on her part declares her readiness to grant an amnesty for National-Socialists, and to provide for their collaboration within the framework of the Patriotic Front."

The Austrian Chancellery announced these decisions in the following *communiqué*:

"The amnesty announced by the Chancellor for Nazi offenders will not on any account extend to people who have been convicted of common crimes. Civil servants disciplined for political offences may not expect reinstatement. Negotiations

for the return home of Austrian emigrants will be initiated. Austrian fugitives to Germany who have been deprived of their Austrian citizenship and those wanted on capital charges cannot hope to return home.

"Attention is drawn to the fact that a new Austrian law for the defence of the State, promulgated on July 10, makes it clear that illegal propaganda for political parties will be followed by the energetic prosecution of those engaged in it. Propaganda for the Anschluss will not be tolerated. In regard to tourists, no precise agreement has yet been reached.

"The German State symbol, the swastika, on flags and badges, may in future be displayed only to the extent laid down in the regulations. Austrian citizens may not display it.

"The circulation in Austria of certain Reich German newspapers is contemplated.¹ Reciprocity will be observed and attention paid to the fact, whether or not the spirit underlying the new agreement is being violated.

"The *Deutschlandlied*, the *Horst Wessel* song, and other songs will continue to be forbidden in Austria. They may be sung by Reich Germans at entertainments given by them for their countrymen alone.

"Each country is to refrain from all aggressive uses of the wireless, films, news services, and the theatre.

"The Austrian Chancellor will invite persons enjoying his confidence as representatives of Austrian nationals to collaborate with him and to share in Austrian political responsibility.

"The German Government is prepared to restore normal economic relations with Austria.

"The foregoing are the principal measures so far discussed between the two Governments. The agreement lays down that as the desired relaxation of political tension can be realized only if certain conditions are fulfilled by each, both Governments undertake to create the necessary conditions."

¹ With the exception of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, all Reich German newspapers had been banned in Austria until then, on account of anti-Austrian propaganda, similar to that of the wireless, being displayed in them. After the conclusion of the agreement the *Essener National-Zeitung*, Field Marshal Goering's organ, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and two other Reich German newspapers, were admitted into Austria.

The agreement of July 11, 1936, in no way fulfilled the expectations which had been attached to it—at least by the Austrian Government.

Although the Thousand-Marks Ban was formally lifted in the late autumn of 1936, the ban on German tourists going to Austria, to all practical purposes, remained effectively in force.

The illegal National-Socialist movement never restricted its activity in Austria for so much as a single day, and Germany did not refrain from supporting it both morally and materially. Austria, on the other hand really endeavoured, from the first day, duly to fulfil the agreement, a fact which has never found recognition in Germany, where at the most it was grudgingly admitted that Austria was fulfilling the agreement according to the letter but certainly not according to the spirit.

The amnesty for National-Socialists as laid down in the agreement was put into effect by Dr. Schuschnigg as early as July 22—that is, only eleven days after the conclusion of the pact. About 800 National-Socialists and 400 Socialists were pardoned and immediately set free. As few as 224 political prisoners, all of them guilty of common crimes, remained unpardoned, among them Dr. Rintelen, who was, however, transferred from prison to the Lainz hospital as he was suffering from a severe attack of uræmia. And, as has already been mentioned, two representatives of the "Nationals" were admitted to the Cabinet.

How little, on the other hand, National-Socialists in Germany and Austria considered themselves to be bound by the agreement became strikingly evident in the light of a "Manifesto of the Executive of the Austrian National-Socialist Party" which was published on July 24, 1936, in the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, the German Nazi party organ. In this manifesto it was stated "that the existence of an indestructible National-Socialist movement in Austria must be recognized if peace is to endure." This compelled the official *Wiener Zeitung* to publish on July 25, a fortnight after the signature of the agreement, a sharp official warning to the Nazis "not to take advantage of the Austrian Government's clemency and desire for reconciliation by resuming political activities, which will not be tolerated and will be severely punished. It must be recalled that National

Socialism remains illegal in Austria, as does also propaganda for the Anschluss ”.

This warning remained ineffective. On July 29 new Nazi tumults broke out in Vienna and Linz. That evening the “handing-over” of the Olympic torch was celebrated in Vienna on the Heldenplatz, where a vast crowd had assembled, and the Government was present to witness the festive event. Hundreds of National-Socialists had not only mingled with the crowd of spectators but had also smuggled themselves on to the stands reserved for the Government and distinguished guests. The moment the torch was handed over to the runner who was to carry it on its next stage in its journey to Berlin, thunderous shouting in chorus broke loose of slogans like “Heil Hitler!”, “One People—one Reich!”, “Plebiscite!”, “We Want Hitler”, “Perish the Jews!”, “Austria Awake!” and so forth. The forbidden *Deutschlandlied* and *Horst Wessel* song were sung, followed by brawls and hand-to-hand fighting. When Prince Starhemberg, in his capacity of supreme sports leader, was about to address the meeting, he was shouted down by Nazi choruses, until the police managed to restore order and made 130 arrests. The arrested men were, without exception, National-Socialists who had only been freed a few days before under the amnesty. They were immediately taken back to Woellersdorf concentration camp. The same happened to National-Socialist demonstrators in Linz who had been “celebrating” the release of Herr Slupetzky, one of their comrades, in their usual loud and provocative way.

Germany replied to these renewed National-Socialist demonstrations with the statement that the disorders had been incited by “Jewish-Marxist agents-provocateurs”. Foreign opinion on the whole affair seemed to view it in a different light. *The Times* in its issue of August 1, 1936, declared:

“The demonstration seems likely to reopen the whole question of the benefit for Austria of the Austro-German agreement. Whereas the agreement on paper was entirely in favour of the Austrian Government, in practice the only effect so far inside Austria has been to bring about a resumption of Nazi activity. If it were only going to bring trouble, and no advantages, the agreement would soon lose its attraction for the Austrian

Government. In the present case the controlled German press has deprecated the disturbances—as such things must be deprecated during the Olympic Games—and this has made things easier for the Austrian Government, for they are able to reproduce in their own Press the official German abuse of the ‘Jewish-Marxists’, who caused Wednesday’s outbreak. But the only thing that would have any permanent value for them is the certainty that such outbreaks will not recur.”

To a greater degree than the agreement itself, the energetic steps taken by the Austrian Government against all further National-Socialist attempts to create disorder in Austria contributed to a more peaceful state of affairs for some time. Dr. Schuschnigg was successful too in other ways. In the first place, the summer of 1936 brought a number of royal visitors to Austria. King Edward VIII, who had twice before been to Austria, again visited Salzburg and Vienna, where he had a long conversation with Dr. Schuschnigg; the Crown-Prince and Crown-Princess of Italy came to Salzburg; the Duke and Duchess of Kent paid a visit to Salzburg and the Tyrol; and Admiral Horthy, the Hungarian Regent, made his first journey abroad the occasion for a prolonged stay in Austria. Most of these visits, if not all, directly or indirectly served political purposes, and helped to strengthen Dr. Schuschnigg’s position.

Things were made still easier for Dr. Schuschnigg when on September 20 the League of Nations’ control over Austria was finally withdrawn, by which the world was shown that the financial and economic position of the Danube Republic was considered so favourable that Austria could from now on be entrusted with guiding her own destiny. Politically, Austria’s position was, curiously enough, further consolidated by the fact that General Goemboes, the Hungarian Premier, suddenly died in a Munich nursing-home; his successor, Dr. Daranyi, was known to be in a much lesser degree under the influence of Herr Hitler and his doctrines. Austria’s resistance to her own inclusion in the Rome-Berlin axis was strengthened by Daranyi’s greater feeling for Schuschnigg and the Danube Plan than for a *rapprochement* with the Reich.

A period of feverish diplomatic activity throughout Central

Europe began. New "fronts" and "axes" were to be formed, those already existing to be reinforced and consolidated. Admiral Horthy not only went to Austria but also paid a visit to Herr Hitler at his mountain chalet at the Obersalzberg. At the beginning of September Dr. Schmidt, Austria's new Foreign Secretary, went to Rome to prepare a conference of the signatories of the Rome Protocols. The conference itself took place in Vienna on November 9, 1936. Italy and Hungary being represented by Count Ciano and M. de Kanya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, respectively. The Little Entente held several conferences at Bukarest and Belgrade; King Carol of Rumania paid a prolonged official visit to Prague; agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia was initiated by Count Ciano's visit to Belgrade, and finally sealed by a Yugoslav return visit to Rome. In November, shortly after the conference of the Rome Pact powers, Dr. Schmidt made his first visit to Berlin, where for the first time Germany's readiness to collaborate actively in the Rome Pact found expression.

The Ethiopian war had long come to its end, and the Spanish Civil War was in full swing, when negotiations between Rome and Berlin finally resulted not only in the formation of the so-called "axis" but also in the first moves to conclude the Anti-Comintern Pact, and in the preparatory steps for Italy's exit from the League of Nations.

The position between Italy and Germany had become reversed strategically in the simplest way. The Ethiopian war had cost Italy men and *matériel* beyond any anticipation; economically and financially the country had been weakened to such a degree that support from Germany was infinitely more imperative than it had been at any time before. While in 1933 and 1934 it had been Herr Hitler who had sought by every manner and means to secure Italy's help and support, it was now, from 1935 until 1937, Italy's turn to obtain support in the rear from Germany's steadily growing military might in case of an eventual conflict in the Mediterranean. The more things aggravated themselves for her in the Mediterranean, the more ready was Italy to grant Germany concessions in Central Europe. These concessions embraced, above all, Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Schuschnigg became all the more aware of these develop-

ments towards the beginning of 1937, as his intimate relationship with Italy had, since the elimination of the Heimwehr, become subject to a gradual estrangement. The death of Dollfuss had already broken the personal link uniting Italy and Austria, but now it was mostly Count Ciano and not Signor Mussolini who represented Italy at important conferences. Invitations to Dr. Schuschnigg to come to Rome became, too, less and less frequent, and, instead of the Chancellor, Dr. Schmidt the Foreign Secretary went to Italy several times. It was felt definitely in Austrian political circles that Signor Mussolini was going out of his way to avoid meeting Dr. Schuschnigg. In the meantime German diplomacy was hard at work in Rome to widen the gulf between Italy and Austria.

It goes without saying that propaganda in Austria herself was at the same time by no means neglected. The strict regime of the police did not leave much room for individual National-Socialist demonstrations, but when on February 22, 1937, Baron Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, arrived in Vienna on a return visit to Dr. Schmidt, another big demonstration by Austrian National-Socialists did take place. Nazis packed the whole route down from the western railway-station to the Hotel Imperial on the Ring, and when Neurath drove past broke forth into their customary roar of shouts and yelling. The police had been ordered, in view of the distinguished rank of the visitor from Berlin, not to prevent any such demonstration of feeling, and not before the Baron had actually reached his hotel did they move the demonstrators on. In the afternoon tens of thousands of members of the Patriotic Front were hastily assembled to line the same streets, and to possess them during the days which followed. They showed themselves preponderant when Neurath drove back.

At the beginning of March 1937 a Nazi *putsch* was disclosed in Budapest revealing what had long been suspected, namely that the work of undermining the Danube States was being carried on by Germany not only from Vienna and the Sudeten-German territories, but also from Hungary. Within a short time, however, the Hungarian Government was able to dissolve the organizations within its own territory.

Apart from these incidents National-Socialist agitation now

concentrated mainly on propaganda against legitimist manifestations in Austria. By the spring of 1937 the Monarchists had abandoned much of their reserve and demonstrated for Archduke Otto at several great mass meetings. Wherever possible, the National-Socialists raided these meetings with stink-bombs and tear-gas. Their efforts, however, had hardly any effect on the activity of the legitimists. Protests against monarchist propaganda which were now made in increasing number by other foreign powers presented them with a much graver issue. Under the leadership of France, the Little Entente States, particularly Yugoslavia, stiffened their opposition to a Habsburg restoration in Austria. When on February 24, 1937, Archduke Otto accompanied his sister Adelheid as far as the Swiss-Austrian frontier at Buchs, casting longing glances into Austria from the Swiss border, this incident caused a great stir in all Little Entente countries, who seemed to expect Archduke Otto to appear on Austrian soil any moment, although in Austria herself nobody thought of such a thing, not even the Monarchists themselves.

But suddenly a new and formidable opponent appeared in the form of Mussolini, who until now had viewed the monarchist idea rather favourably. At the end of February 1937 the head of the Italian State made himself clearly understood on this question when his mouthpiece, Signor Gayda, wrote in the *Giornale d'Italia*: "Italy regards the question of an Austrian restoration as untimely and dangerous." And at the same time the *Stampa* of Turin reported a similar attitude being adopted in Vatican circles. Warnings like these were ominous, and Dr. Schuschnigg was bound to listen to them.

He threw all his force at once into negotiations to bring about an agreement with the Little Entente on the Danube Plan before the Rome-Berlin axis had become too strong. The foundations for this plan, especially for a far-reaching co-operation between Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia had now been thoroughly prepared by repeated visits of Dr. Hodza to Vienna, all three States being conscious of the dangers inherent in the Rome-Berlin axis. Dr. Daranyi, the Hungarian Premier, had even swallowed sacrificially his old hostility to Czechoslovakia, in order to remove the last possible obstacle preventing the

Danube Plan from coming into existence. The Little Entente conference of April 2, 1937, prepared the best of conditions for the Plan, and it looked very much like maturing, as *The Times* put it, on the occasion of a visit by President Benes to Belgrade: "Although it would be premature to assume that as a result of Yugoslavia's recent *rapprochement* with Italy and President Benes' visit, the countries of the Little Entente will enter into a collective agreement with the signatory powers of the Rome Protocols (Italy, Austria, and Hungary), it is obvious that the plan for closer economic co-operation in the Danube Basin is beginning to take shape."

But to Germany the Danube Plan presented just as many dangers as a restoration of the Habsburgs. She struck three weeks later. But Signor Mussolini was her weapon.

Volte-face

DR. SCHUSCHNIGG after a long interval was invited on April 22, 1937, to meet Signor Mussolini in Venice. In the course of conversations lasting two days it became quite clear for the first time that Signor Mussolini had made a *volte-face*. He was now, for the first time, definitely more interested in Berlin than in Vienna.

The first evidence of his change of attitude was contained in the official Italian statement issued after the Venice conversations, in which for once no mention was made of Italy's vital interest in the independence of Austria. The statement, while still emphasizing the importance of the Rome Protocols and the necessity of widening their scope, also contained the remark that "the Rome Protocols may be extended to other Danubian States under certain conditions to be determined individually in each case." A few days later it became known that this sentence was included with particular reference to Dr. Schuschnigg's conversations with Dr. Hodza, and that Signor Mussolini had voiced his strongest objection to the Danube Plan, negotiations which had at that time already reached an almost final stage. It also became known that Signor Mussolini had demanded from Dr. Schuschnigg, in execution of the agreement of July 11, 1936, the inclusion in the Austrian Cabinet of one Austrian National-Socialist, to be nominated by Berlin. In the course of protracted negotiations Dr. Schuschnigg succeeded in persuading Signor Mussolini to abandon this proposal, in exchange, however, for an assurance that he would not continue negotiations with Dr. Hodza and that a National-Socialist confidant would be admitted into the Patriotic Front. Whenever the Patriotic Front was about to take measures against the National-Socialists, it was to be his duty to attempt mediation first of all through the man holding this post.

The name of the man nominated for this post was Dr. Arthur Seyss-Inquart.

His name, which was to become so closely connected with the end of Austria, was thus actually heard for the first time in public eleven months before it was to achieve a final and fatal importance. The man who first mentioned it was Signor Mussolini, acting clearly on behalf of Herr Hitler.

Although he had been able to prevent the entry of a National Socialist actually into the Cabinet, Dr. Schuschnigg had nevertheless to give way to Signor Mussolini. A few days later Dr. Seyss-Inquart was appointed to the Patriotic Front as leader of the so-called *Volkspolitisches Referat*, a very vague name which may be translated "National Political Committee", the purpose of which was very vague too. In the light of what happened subsequently it might as well have been translated "National-Socialist Cell". This body, which was to play a special part in the developments of the following months, had its roots in the so-called *Nationalbetonten* ("Accentuated Nationals") whose activities in Upper Austria have been described earlier. They formed an independent group within the Patriotic Front, where they were to look after the interests of a so-called *Volkspolitik* (National Policy), which again was only another name for National Socialism. A committee of seven was formed, headed by Dr. Seyss-Inquart, under whose central leadership it was to represent not too closely specified "national interests" in the different Federal provinces.

In order to understand the succeeding events, and in particular the—at the time almost incomprehensible—silence maintained by Italy when the Germans marched into Austria, it is essential to realize the background of Italy's evident reversal of fronts.

Italy needed a free hand in the Mediterranean, but no longer needed to have her rear covered in Central Europe. Her interest in a further encirclement of Yugoslavia had decreased considerably after peace had been formally concluded with that country. What she wanted chiefly was Germany's military help in Spain and her support in all diplomatic issues opposing her to Great Britain and to France. The first signs became apparent

of what later became clear beyond doubt. Europe had been divided into spheres of interest between Italy and Germany, the former reserving for herself Spain, the Mediterranean, the Adriatic and Northern Africa, the latter being allotted Central and Eastern Europe. No student of Italian policy during the last four years can fail to notice that Italy's interest in continental Europe has notably decreased since the conquest of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian and the Spanish campaigns had cost Italy so heavily in men, *matériel* and money that it became impossible for her, from the beginning of 1937, to do without the active help of Germany. Signor Mussolini could no longer risk for a second time marching his troops to the Brenner against Germany. He preferred to convey Herr Hitler's wishes to Dr. Schuschnigg and to persuade him, without resorting to arms, to gradually concede one demand made by Berlin after the other. The fact that Dr. Schuschnigg, in spite of this pressure on both sides, managed to hold his own for almost another whole year is a remarkable testimony to the zeal, energy, and skill with which he fought for the independence of his country.

Signor Mussolini's somersault after Venice brought him a paean of noisy praise in the German press, exultant in victory. But Schuschnigg, back in Vienna, declared at once that he would resist even more tenaciously any admittance of National-Socialists into the Vienna Cabinet; he would try now to bring about an understanding with the working class. Towards the end of April 1937, for the first time since February 1934, contacts were made between Dr. Schuschnigg's representatives and those of the former Social Democratic trade unions, and an attempt was made to prepare the ground for further negotiations at a later date. The Reich German press acknowledged this "affront" with fierce attacks on the Chancellor, and in Italy too Dr. Schuschnigg's gesture gave rise to some unpleasant comment.

For the moment, however, Dr. Schuschnigg had won. The first attack of the Rome-Berlin axis had been victoriously repulsed. It was his first Pyrrhic victory.'

In the last days of April, immediately after the meeting between Mussolini and Schuschnigg at Venice, Baron Neurath and General Goering arrived in Rome. Long conversations between them and Signor Mussolini resulted in another definition and delineation of German and Italian spheres of interest. They had their first result in Neurath's journey to the Balkan States at the end of May 1937, the purpose of which was to strengthen Germany's influence in those countries.

Returning from Venice Dr. Schuschnigg realized two things. First, he had to drop Otto or infuriate Mussolini. Secondly he had to drop the Danube Plan, or infuriate both Mussolini and Hitler. Consequently his foreign policy had to take a new line. Support was sought, and to some extent found, in Hungary.

From May 2 to 5, 1937, President Miklas, accompanied by his Chancellor Schuschnigg and his Foreign Secretary Schmidt, paid a State visit to Budapest, resulting in a renewed affirmation of the joint Austro-Hungarian front against National Socialism. Dr. Hodza, the Czech Premier, too, had several meetings with Dr. Schuschnigg, although great care was taken to maintain their entirely private and unofficial character. The two premiers met at Baden, and again on the Semmering, but in official announcements these meetings were never mentioned. The coronation of King George VI provided another opportunity for Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia to maintain unofficial contact. Dr. Hodza, Dr. Schmidt, and M. de Kanya met in London, where they certainly did not miss their chance to inform the Governments of London and Paris of the trend of events in Central Europe. In the middle of June the Little Entente met once again aboard a steamer on the Danube in Rumania, and the will and determination of Austria and Hungary to pursue their collaboration once more found expression.

But German and Italian pressure on Austria had in the meantime considerably gathered in strength. Being much less dependent on Austrian raw materials now that sanctions had been lifted, Italy gave notice to terminate a number of customs preferences on Austrian goods, and in subsequent trade negotiations made it clear that she was compelled to cut down her imports from Austria to the advantage of other countries. The Reich Government intervened through its diplomatic represen-

tative in Vienna, urging a further extension of the rights of the "Nationals" in Austria. In face of such pressure Schuschnigg had little choice and agreed to widen the scope of the "National Political Committee" in the Patriotic Front. Besides Dr. Seyss-Inquart, a lawyer from Innsbruck, Dr. Pernbaur, was appointed to the leading position of a National-Socialist representative in the Patriotic Front. This concession was shortly followed by another, when "Regional Councillors" were appointed, one for each Federal province. Neither of them, however, prevented Dr. Schuschnigg from continuing to take strong measures against all National-Socialist attempts to demonstrate. When disorders broke out during a Rugby match between Germany and Austria in Vienna, and during a meeting of German and Austrian ex-Service men at Wels in the middle of June, the police did not hesitate to nip these disturbances in the bud.

At the beginning of July 1937, accompanied by his little son, Dr. Schuschnigg once again travelled to Italy, apparently in the expectation that an opportunity for another conversation with Signor Mussolini would present itself. This did not happen. Schuschnigg had seen Mussolini for the last time at the end of April 1937. After two days' stay on the Adriatic he returned to Vienna, where in the meantime German representatives had arrived who wanted to discuss the interpretation of the agreement of July 11, 1936, the execution of which by the Austrian partner had incurred the dissatisfaction of Berlin. After a highly unpleasant interlude, in the course of which the German delegates threatened to leave, considering themselves hurt by an alleged Press attack, Dr. Schuschnigg intervened personally in the negotiations. A short amendment of the agreement was agreed upon, at its face value only clearing up some irrelevant questions concerning the Press. In fact, however, it allowed Herr Hitler's book, *My Struggle*, which had hitherto been banned, to be sold in Austria.

In the course of the summer several attempts were made on the part of Austria to promote better relations with Germany. Dr. Schuschnigg had felt, in view of Signor Mussolini's waning interest in Austria, that new safeguards had to be sought. But none of these attempts met with any notable success. Dr.

Schmidt, the Foreign Secretary, towards the middle of July, had a meeting with Baron Neurath on the Arlberg, and at the beginning of September went to see General Goering in Berlin—but none of these moves had the slightest effect. Feeling in Germany remained implacably opposed to Schuschnigg.

Austria's fate was to be decided and sealed behind the scenes.

On September 25 Signor Mussolini went to Germany.

Behind the glittering façade of his triumphal reception far-reaching decisions were made. Although official speeches and announcements contained no references either to Austria or Czechoslovakia, Vienna and Prague by then already guessed or even knew that on all important issues Mussolini had given Hitler a free hand in Central Europe. To put it more accurately: the respective agreements were made not between Mussolini and Hitler but between Mussolini and Goering. Well-informed circles were already then in a position to reveal that in the last days of September 1937 Goering had actually put before Mussolini nothing less than the entire and complete picture of Germany's designs and plans in Central Europe. Signor Mussolini had listened to everything most patiently and then indicated that all this might well be discussed at greater length and in more detail at the proper moment.

For the first time Mussolini's definite disinterest in Austria had become openly manifest. The death-sentence over Austria had at last been pronounced; but it would still take some time to carry it out. All that Herr Hitler needed for the time being was, not Italy's formal agreement with his plans, but merely her benevolent attitude of "let's wait and see how things go". That was sufficient. For the rest Hitler would know how to direct things the way he needed them.

Less than a month later, on October 22, Herr von Ribbentrop, then German Ambassador not to Rome but to the Court of St. James, arrived once more in the Italian capital, and the Anti-Comintern Pact was concluded between Germany and Italy. Shortly before that Italy had left the League of Nations. The Rome-Berlin axis was stronger than ever before.

On November 10, 1937, the Vienna Government was handed a note from the Reich Government protesting in the strongest of

terms against the manner in which Austria was alleged to have carried out the agreement of July 11, and adopting a stern attitude towards Austria's monarchist aspirations.

The statement contained the warning that certain things which had happened in Austria were calculated greatly to embitter the National opposition to Dr. Schuschnigg, and were therefore not likely to promote the process of internal pacification in Austria, which was also desired by the Reich.

The agreement of July 11, 1936, the statement pointed out, which was the guarantee of peace between Germany and Austria and of peace within Austria, rested on two principles. The first, relating to the independence of Austria, had been carefully upheld by the Austrian Government. In the upholding of the second of Austria's undertakings, to conduct her affairs as a "German State", the Austrian Government had been less thorough.

She had seemed, it was suggested, to tolerate elements which carried the idea of independence as far as opposition to the Reich. Things had gone so far, it was stated, "that important persons had suggested as the ideal objective the conversion of Austria into a Switzerland, while the Legitimist campaign had been aspiring to create an 'Austrian nation'. These elements, which propagated their ideas overtly, had not hitherto been interfered with by the authorities. Indeed, signs of a benevolent tolerance were not lacking."

The statement went on to say that those movements might lead to a destruction of the agreement of July 11, and to the disturbance of the friendly relations between the two German States. Reference was then made to the embitterment of the National opposition and its possible effects on the internal peace of Austria.

Time and again attempts had been made from abroad to separate Austria from the Reich and to draw her into a foreign combination on the pretence that she was being threatened by the Reich. Not only was there evidence that the process of pacification had not yet been successful, but there was also plenty of evidence that dissatisfaction existed. From the point of view of the Reich, it seemed that it should not be too difficult to create a normal state of affairs in the interests of Austria, of the Reich, and of the whole German nation. But the con-

dition of success must be that the two principles of Austrian policy as set out in the July agreement were to be observed in a more impartial manner than hitherto.

In addition to the activities mentioned in the statement, National-Socialist Germany had been irritated by incidents in which Austrian ministers had been involved. In one case ministers had listened without protest while M. Paul Reynaud, in a lecture in Vienna, had expounded views on the responsibility for the Great War which offended opinion in the Reich. On another recent occasion Austrian ministers had sat through a lecture by a Roman Catholic priest who had not minced words about the difficulties of the Church in the Reich.

The ministers' behaviour was considered in the Reich to be inappropriate to their position as representatives of a German State.

For clearness and straightforwardness, this "warning" from Germany hardly left anything to be desired. It constituted the first direct intervention by Berlin in purely internal Austrian affairs, on the pretence that Austria had professed to be a "German State". The Austrian Government made anything but light of the Note, although it was never published in Austria. The German communication appeared still nastier when on the same day Herr von Keppler arrived in Vienna as Herr Hitler's special envoy (the same Herr von Keppler who, on March 10, 1938, handed Herr Hitler's first ultimatum to Dr. Schuschnigg) in order to arrange with the Austrian Government, under the pressure of the Note which had just been delivered, for a visit to Austria by General Goering in the near future, with the aim of securing Austria's active co-operation in the German Four-Year Plan. Once more Dr. Schuschnigg was successful in twisting the sting out of the threat, and General Goering's visit was for the moment postponed.

The Monarchist activity which had so irritated Germany had consisted mainly in the Legitimists' holding meetings strictly within the framework of the Patriotic Front, and in the setting-up of a Legitimist *Schutztruppe*, or protection corps, whose duty it was to prevent Legitimist meetings from being disturbed by National-Socialists. They had succeeded in persuading the Government to adopt a law by virtue of which the entire former

property of the Habsburg family was to be returned, including the castles of Laxenburg, Orth, and Muerzsteg. A few days after the promulgation of this law a delegation of Austrian Legitimists, headed by Baron Wiesner, had established personal contact with Archduke Otto, whom they met at Vaduz Castle, the property of the Prince of Liechtenstein, some three and a half miles beyond the Austrian frontier. Yet again Otto had not entered Austrian territory but had merely received personally the reports of his agents.

At this juncture Berlin seemed determined not to wait any longer. A new conference of the signatories of the Rome Protocols was held in Budapest on January 10, 1938, in the presence of Dr. Schuschnigg, Dr. Schmidt, Count Ciano, Dr. Daranyi, and M. de Kanya. It was the occasion for Count Ciano to hand Austria a series of new and most categorical demands. Once again Signor Mussolini acted as Herr Hitler's spokesman. The demands were threefold:

(a) Dr. Schuschnigg was to have immediate and direct conversations with Herr Hitler.

(b) Austria was to join the Anti-Comintern Pact.

(c) Austria and Hungary were to leave the League of Nations.

The joint resistance which Austria and Hungary put up against the Italian demands and Italy's—however slight, but still not completely vanished—interest in the Rome Pact, prevented an open rupture from taking place there and then. The Budapest conference threatened to break down, when Italy once more gave way to Austria's and Hungary's wishes. Dr. Schuschnigg refused to enter into conversations with Herr Hitler, or even to go to Germany; Austria's adherence to the Anti-Comintern Pact, and the exit of both States from the League of Nations, could be prevented. In a statement issued after the Budapest conference emphasis was once more laid on the necessity of widening the scope of the Rome Protocols, but apart from this it was couched in cold, almost icy terms.

Dr. Schuschnigg's remarkable dialectics, assisted by Dr. Daranyi's faithful adherence to the Pact, had secured another distinct victory.

That was Dr. Schuschnigg's second Pyrrhic victory.

During the whole of January 1938, invitations were showered on Dr. Schuschnigg, urging him to go to Germany and to settle all pending questions with Herr Hitler personally. Herr von Papen conveyed one invitation upon another, intimations from Rome that they should be accepted became increasingly cogent, but Dr. Schuschnigg unconditionally refused to accept any of these proposals.

Then at the end of January and the beginning of February two events occurred which finally decided Dr. Schuschnigg to make his fateful journey to the Obersalzberg.

They were the disclosure of the so-called Tavs Plan, and the reconstruction of the German Government on February 4, in the course of which Herr von Papen was recalled from his post in Vienna.

The Berchtesgaden Trap

"THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR Dr. Schuschnigg has left Vienna tonight for the Tyrol, where he will spend the week-end."

That was the announcement of the official Austrian news-agency on the evening of February 11, 1938. It was a Friday, and armed with his skis Dr. Schuschnigg had boarded the night express from the Vienna western station.

Towards noon the following day the rumour began to trickle through in Vienna that the official announcement had been misleading. Dr. Schuschnigg had not gone ski-ing in the Tyrol. He had gone to Berchtesgaden to see Herr Hitler.

At first every one refused to believe these rumours: they sounded too incredible. But persistent inquiries at the Chancellery and the Foreign Legations finally confirmed it. It was the truth. Towards 3 P.M. the fact had become generally known in Vienna. Tremendous excitement, an agitation little short of a panic, instantly seized the people of Vienna.

Every one realized that no less than the existence of Austria was at stake.

What were the factors which had induced Dr. Schuschnigg finally to give up his resistance? What made him enter the lion's den?

The "National Political Committee"—that is, the National-Socialist cell within the Patriotic Front—had been allotted premises for their offices by the Government in a building in the Teinfaltstrasse in Vienna. This house had generally come to be regarded as the stronghold of the National-Socialists in Vienna. On the floor below the offices of the "National Political Committee" the illegal branch of the Austrian National Socialist party had its headquarters. In charge was Herr Leopold, a former captain of the Volkswehr, who had spent several terms of imprisonment at Woellersdorf concentration

camp and other prisons for illegal political activity; his secretary was a certain Dr. Leopold Tavs. Following a denunciation which had been received from circles known to be in close connexion with the German Embassy in Vienna, the Austrian State police, on January 26, 1938, made a thorough search of the premises of the building in the Teinfaltstrasse. This search produced a complete new plan for a new National-Socialist *putsch*, besides which enormous quantities of propaganda material, arms, and compromising literature fell into the hands of the authorities. Dr. Tavs and a number of his collaborators were instantly arrested; Captain Leopold was ordered to hold himself at the disposal of the police, since the extent to which he was responsible for the plans could not be quite decided.

These papers, which contained the secret plan for another Nazi *putsch*, later became known as the "Tavs Documents". They comprised no more and no less than a complete battle order for the entry of the German troops, the German Black Guards and Storm Trooper battalions, into Austria, worked out to the last and most minute detail. The documents were photographed by the Government, and among other things forwarded personally to Signor Mussolini, but they were never published. Nevertheless their contents are known in all their details. The following were their chief points.

Towards the beginning of March a new wave of terrorism was to break out which was to throw all previous attempts into the shade. Bombs were to explode in as many towns and villages as possible, clashes between the National-Socialist Storm Troopers and the Black Guards, and the supporters of the Patriotic Front, were to be provoked without restraint and ruthless bloodshed was to follow.

As if in retaliation or revenge for National-Socialist attacks the German Legation in Vienna was to be stormed and set on fire, and Herr von Papen, the Ambassador, was to be assassinated. This feat of revenge, however, was to be performed by National-Socialists, who, disguised in uniforms of the Emergency Corps of the Patriotic Front, were to penetrate the building of the Legation. The plan was thus similar to that of the attempted rising of July 25, 1934, only with the important difference that this time it was not the Chancellor who was to

he assassinated by disguised National-Socialists but the German Ambassador. This seems to explain why the information received by the police had its origin in circles close to the German Legation. It explains moreover the later disappearance of Herr von Ketteler, the Ambassador's secretary, whose body was found in the Danube below Vienna on May 16, 1938.

The raid on the German Legation, the assassination of Herr von Papen, and the incendiary fire laid by (disguised) members of the Patriotic Front were to cause the immediate intervention of the Reich Government in Austria. In order to "protect the German honour and the national-minded population of Austria" strong detachments of the German S.A. (Storm Troopers) and S.S. (Black Guards), as well as contingents of the German Army, were to cross the frontier at the order of Berlin and to proceed as rapidly as possible with the occupation of all Austrian territory.

This plan was supplemented by detailed schemes for the mobilization and marching orders for German troops, as well as a completely evolved scheme for the distribution of units in all parts of Austria. Besides the different formations of the National-Socialist party organizations, the participation in the occupation of the Eighth German Army Corps, garrisoned in Wuerttemberg, was expressly mentioned.

All these plans bore the counter-signature of Herr R. H., a responsible leader of the German National-Socialist party, and member of the German Cabinet. And when the march of the German troops into Austria actually took place on March 12 it proceeded exactly on the lines laid down in the documents seized at the office of Dr. Tavs.

The plan had been elaborated with an almost satanic cleverness, and had it succeeded would have resulted in the most terrible bloodshed. In the course of succeeding events opinions were at variance as to how and why exactly the Vienna police had been informed of its existence, some holding that the police had intentionally been notified in order to prevent bloodshed while others thought they had reason to believe that the plan was actually betrayed by a person or persons who feared an immediate attempt against the life of Herr von Papen. That the true motive will ever be revealed is highly improbable now

that the death of Herr von Ketteler has been established, although perhaps one day Herr von Papen will see fit to speak.

When Dr. Schuschnigg received these documents for once he lost his temper. He had several very frank conversations with Herr von Papen, and diplomatic steps were taken in Rome and Berlin to protest against the violation of the July agreement by Germany.

Berlin however took very little notice. The capital of the Reich was fully busy with other problems. A big reshuffle among the highest Government posts took place in the period from January 25 to February 4. The balance of power within the Reich Government rocked and shook the Government and finally shifted. Herr Hitler was about to strike decisively against the influence of the Reichswehr and of all those men who had remained in office since the pre-National-Socialist era. Field-Marshal von Blomberg and General von Fritsch, the War Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr, were forced out of the Army; Baron Neurath, the foreign Minister, and the ambassadors von Papen, von Hassel, and von Dirksen were recalled from their posts, all men of old landed-gentry stock and belonging to the traditional school of diplomacy. Their posts were occupied by leading men of the National-Socialist party and Generals whose loyalty to Herr Hitler and the party were beyond doubt. Herr Hitler appointed himself Minister of War, General Goering was promoted to the rank of Field-Marshal; Herr von Ribbentrop, hitherto German Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, was appointed Foreign Minister and assumed complete control of the Wilhemstrasse, an office for which he had long been longing; the supreme Army commands were entrusted to Generals von Brauchitsch, Keitel, List, von Reichenau, and Becker—all men enjoying the complete confidence of Herr Hitler and the party. Baron Neurath was made president of a newly created Secret Cabinet Council, where he was surrounded exclusively by faithful party men like Goering, Goebbels, Ribbentrop, Hess, Brauchitsch, and Keitel, and deprived of all his influence.

It had always been common knowledge in Austrian circles that plans for a march of German troops into Austria or some

other *tour de force* had consistently met with the firm opposition of the old Army leaders, Generals Blomberg and Fritsch, and of Baron Neurath, the Foreign Minister. Thus when suddenly the Supreme Command of the Army as well as the Foreign Office were put into the hands of leading National-Socialists, it became evident to every clear-sighted observer that a formidable obstacle to the "German March" had been removed, and that actually Austria was faced with a direct and immediate threat. While the illegal activity of Austrian National-Socialists had so far been invariably disavowed in official German circles, and described as individual actions for which neither the Foreign Office nor the Reich Government as a whole could be held responsible, and which in the worst case could be placed to the account of the party, from now on every conflict between the Austrian Government and the illegal movement in Austria was to become automatically a conflict between the Austrian and German Governments, the latter being now completely controlled by the party. An extremely delicate, if not highly awkward, position had arisen, which in Germany was being described as an "impressive concentration of forces". And, in fact, nothing could describe the situation more aptly.

Among the Austrian newspapers only the *Neue Freie Presse*, on the day after the reconstruction of the German Cabinet, saw clearly the far-reaching importance of this change: "This solution, which not only puts an end to the Blomberg crisis but creates entirely new conditions, is regarded in all political circles as well as in German public opinion as the most drastic that could have been expected. As far-reaching as its effects may prove in foreign policy, and as heavily as it may weigh on international relations, in which the person of Baron Neurath has always been a factor of very distinct and definite meaning, this will be completely overshadowed by the important effect which the change in the organization of the Army will have on the internal situation of the Reich, the extent of which indeed cannot possibly be overestimated."

Herr von Papen, recalled from his post simultaneously with Baron Neurath on February 4, 1938, left Vienna the very next

morning. Intending originally to travel directly to Berlin, he received a telegram while on his way in Linz ordering him to proceed at once to the Obersalzberg, Herr Hitler's country house. He therefore broke his journey in Linz, where he spent the night, and on the morning of February 6 (a Sunday), arrived at Obersalzberg only to return to Vienna the very same evening. Herr Hitler had offered him a last chance—to induce Dr. Schuschnigg at the eleventh hour to concede a personal conversation with the Fuehrer. And Herr von Papen eagerly took it.

On February 7 he handed Dr. Schuschnigg another and very unmistakably couched invitation from Herr Hitler.

During almost four years of his diplomatic activity in Vienna Herr von Papen had succeeded in making a number of important friends not only in "National" circles but also among Catholics. Being a Catholic himself and a former member of the defunct German Catholic Centre party, he had found it considerably easier to establish close contacts with Austrian Catholic circles than any German Ambassador before him. His personal relations with Dr. Schuschnigg were never very intimate, but remained confined to a friendly correctness. But Dr. Schmidt, the Foreign Minister, Dr. Funder, the highly influential editor of the Government *Reichspost*, and the chiefs of the Government's Press Department, Minister Ludwig and Colonel Adam, had to a considerable extent come under his influence. Availing himself during the following days of all these valuable connexions, he managed to bring about concerted pressure on Dr. Schuschnigg from all sides to reconsider his attitude and accept the invitation after all, his chief argument being that the Chancellor, being in possession of the Tavs Documents, would be in a position to avail himself of no better opportunity to put his complaints of illegal activities personally before the Fuehrer. In a joint effort with Dr. Schmidt, Herr von Papen succeeded in convincing Dr. Schuschnigg that he had absolutely nothing to fear from this interview, since the independence of Austria would in all circumstances remain guaranteed by Germany and no demands would be made by Herr Hitler which would be incompatible with either the sovereignty or the constitution of the Austrian State.

Inquiry in Rome, where the interview had been urgently desired first in April 1937 and then in January 1938, showed him without doubt that the pressure exerted by Herr von Papen and Dr. Schmidt was vigorously reinforced by Signor Mussolini. Thus, it seemed, there was no choice.

Dr. Schuschnigg walked into the trap.

He started on his journey to Berchtesgaden on the evening of February 11, 1938, accompanied, besides Herr von Papen and Dr. Schmidt, by only four gentlemen of his immediate entourage, who, however, did not cross the German border with him, but remained behind in a Salzburg hotel where they were to wait for the Chancellor's return. The part played by Dr. Schmidt, the Foreign Secretary, requires little additional explanation, if it is remembered that he joined the Cabinet of Dr. Schuschnigg after July 11, 1936, at the express desire of the responsible quarters in Berlin. Dr. Schmidt was a Catholic, and had been educated at the same school as Dr. Schuschnigg, the "Stella Matutina" at Feldkirch. He was married to a lady who owned large properties in Germany. He had been avowedly impressed by the power and might of National Socialism during his repeated journeys to the Reich, particularly after he had been received by Herr Hitler personally at the end of 1936. When, after the fall of Dr. Schuschnigg a new Austrian Cabinet was formed under the leadership of Dr. Seyss-Inquart, the post of Foreign Minister was immediately and without hesitation offered to Dr. Schmidt, who also in the further course of events never suffered any trouble at the hands of the Nazis but on the contrary was repeatedly awarded special honours by them.

Dr. Schuschnigg, accompanied by Papen and Schmidt, found himself completely alone on the fateful 12th February when he went to face Herr Hitler.

More strictly he was not quite alone. Herr von Ribbentrop was there too, and some of the most influential German Army Generals.

The following report of the external events of the day was published by the official *Wiener Zeitung*:

"On the morning of February 12, 1938, the Federal Chan-

cellor Dr. Schuschnigg, accompanied by Secretary of State Dr. Schmidt and Herr von Papen, the German Ambassador, left Salzburg by car and drove to the Obersalzberg. While the remaining gentlemen of the Chancellor's entourage made their headquarters at the Hotel "Chiemseehof" at Salzburg, Dr. Peter-Pirkham, Secretary of the Legation, followed the two statesmen to the Obersalzberg. The guests were received by Herr Hitler on his doorstep and shown through the house. This was followed by a private conversation between the Reich Chancellor and the Federal Chancellor alone. Luncheon was taken in the presence of the German Foreign Minister Herr von Ribbentrop, the Chief of the Supreme Command of the German Army, Infantry General Wilhelm Keitel, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Munich Air Force Squadron, Herr Sperrl, the former commander of the Munich Army Corps and recently appointed Commander-in-Chief of Group IV of the German Army Corps at Leipzig, General von Reichenau, and the Chief of the Reich Press Department, Secretary of State Dr. Dietrich. The Austrian Legation remained at the Obersalzberg until after 10 P.M."

The conversations had lasted almost uninterruptedly for eleven hours.

Such was the setting of the historic interview. Of the negotiations proper so many details have become known in the meantime that it is possible to reconstruct entirely their course.

Already while driving along the road from Salzburg *via* Reichenhall towards Berchtesgaden, Dr. Schuschnigg had seen for himself that rumours current in Vienna about concentration of troops along the Austro-German frontier were hardly exaggerated. The entire corner of Bavarian territory which in this region drives a sharp eastwardly directed wedge into Austria, resembled one huge army camp, with troops of all categories as well as S.A. and S.S. concentrated. Bombing and chasing aeroplanes constantly circled overhead, and the Berchtesgaden aerodrome was more than overcrowded with squadrons of the German Air Force.

The first meeting between Herr Hitler and Dr. Schuschnigg was made the subject of a cruel joke in Vienna. The official

form of "Austrian salute", as it then existed, was to raise the right hand with three fingers lifted accompanied by the greeting word "Austria!" Political satire quickly seized its opportunity. Dr. Schuschnigg (so the joke had it) arrived at Obersalzberg and asked Herr Hitler: "What do you want?" Whereupon Herr Hitler raised his right hand with three fingers lifted and replied: "Austria!"

In point of fact, the demands put before Dr. Schuschnigg by Herr Hitler during their first interview which lasted almost two hours, comprised no more and no less than practically the whole of Austria. They numbered, as became known later, a total of about twenty, the most important of which were:

1. Recognition of the National-Socialist party in Austria.
2. Appointment of a National-Socialist to the post of Vice-Chancellor.
3. Appointment of a National-Socialist to the post of Minister of the Interior and of Public Security.
4. Appointment of a National-Socialist to the post of War Minister.
5. Complete amnesty for all convicted National-Socialists.
6. Suppression of the Monarchist movement in Austria.
7. Admission of National-Socialists into the Patriotic Front, the legislative bodies, and all other official organizations.
8. Incorporation of Austria in the German Four-Year Plan.
9. Currency union between Austria and Germany.
10. Preferential conditions for Germany in the export of Austrian timber and ores.
11. Austria to leave the League of Nations.
12. Austria to join the Anti-Comintern Pact.
13. A military alliance and incorporation of the Austrian army in the German army.
14. Immediate preparations for new general elections.
15. Admittance of all German newspapers to Austrian territory.
16. Elimination of all "Non-Aryan" influence from the Austrian Press.

Dr. Schuschnigg was at first completely dazed. He quickly regained his countenance, however, and declared that, as

Chancellor of Austria, he was unable to concede the majority of these demands. An extremely heated argument followed in the conference-room. At times the excited voices of the two Chancellors became so loud as to be clearly audible in the ante-chamber.

Since agreement could obviously not be reached during this first direct interview, Herr Hitler resorted to stronger pressure and open blackmail. At the luncheon table a number of German Generals, whose names have already been mentioned above, suddenly appeared and revealed themselves as the Commanders-in-Chief of those army corps which were garrisoned closest to the Austrian frontier. Frequent and repeated mention was made by these Generals at the table of their military plans which Dr. Schuschnigg was shattered to recognize as completely identical with those contained in the Tavs documents, which he had brought with him to the Obersalzberg! Herr Hitler himself and Herr von Ribbentrop made no bones about what they intended to do, namely, to march the German Army into Austria immediately, should their demands be refused. A particularly gruesome picture was drawn by Herr Sperrl, Commander-in-Chief of the Munich flying squads, who declared openly at the luncheon table that he had concentrated between 400 and 500 aeroplanes at the Austro-Bavarian frontier, which were ready at any moment to fly to Vienna if ordered to do so by Herr Hitler.

Dr. Schuschnigg, in spite of all this, refused to be frightened out of his determination to uphold Austrian interests as firmly as possible. When making his great speech before the Austrian Parliament in Vienna on February 24 he could, however, not help speaking of the "hard day at Berchtesgaden which had made the most terrific demands on the nerves of all parties concerned." Actually it is only due to Dr. Schuschnigg's extreme skill in negotiating that the march of the German army into Austria did not take place there and then. An afternoon of tenacious and relentless bargaining followed, in the presence of Herr von Ribbentrop, Herr von Papen, and Dr. Schmidt, in the course of which Dr. Schuschnigg gradually, step by step, gained ground and finally was able to reduce Herr Hitler's demands from about twenty to three, which, on

the evening of February 12 he finally agreed to grant. They were:

1. The appointment of a National-Socialist to the post of Minister of the Interior and Public Security (with control of the police).
2. A complete amnesty for all National-Socialists.
3. Admission of National-Socialists to the administration, permission for their co-operation in all departments of public life, although exclusively within the framework of the Patriotic Front.

Leaving the Obersalzberg in the early hours of the night, Dr. Schuschnigg had been compelled to make a number of concessions. But, as it appeared then, he had saved infinitely more than he had sacrificed. He had saved his Government, the independence of his country, the foundations of the constitution, and the Patriotic Front. In fact, he had saved Austria.

It was his third and last Pyrrhic victory.

Meanwhile tension in Vienna had reached its pitch. The town was buzzing with a thousand different and equally disturbing rumours, which were yet accentuated by the fact that actually no one knew what had really happened at Berchtesgaden. In the afternoon representatives of the Foreign and the Austrian Press were received by Colonel Adam at the Government Press Department and informed of the general trend of the Obersalzberg negotiations, but this information was entirely one-sided. Colonel Adam took great care to emphasize that the Austrian delegation had insisted on the maintenance of the State's independence, of the constitution, and of the Patriotic Front, that Dr. Schuschnigg had taken the Tavs documents with him to the Obersalzberg, and that in fact these new negotiations were based exclusively on the agreement of July 11, 1936, and merely concerned with a possible widening of its scope. No mention was made of plans and proposals put forward from the German side.

With the advancing hours uncertainty and anxiety grew. Originally Dr. Schuschnigg had been expected back in Salzburg

at 5 P.M. Rumours were current in the early hours of the evening that he was being held prisoner at Berchtesgaden. These were, however, most categorically denied. Towards 11 P.M. the Press was at last informed by the Foreign Office that Dr. Schuschnigg had crossed the frontier back into Austria, and until the late hours of the night all official circles were still busy informing everybody that the foundations of the Austrian State had emerged untouched, and that, at least in this respect, Dr. Schuschnigg's conversations had been a full success.

Dr. Schuschnigg returned that same night by special train, and arrived at Vienna western station in the early hours of Sunday morning. Pressmen photographed him and Dr. Schmidt when they were greeted at the station, and these photographs were published in all the big weeklies. Never have I seen a face more tired and more desperately worn out than his.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A Government by the grace of Berlin

VIENNA AWOKE late that Sunday morning. The excitement and disturbing rumours of the evening before had kept people up late, and many had stayed up till as late as two or even three o'clock hoping anxiously for some further news. On Sunday morning the streets of Vienna were empty and deserted.

There was one big question on everybody's lips: What was Italy going to say to all this? Had Mussolini approved of the settlement made the day before?

This question, uppermost in all minds, received no answer. Signor Mussolini remained silent.

Soon it became known that Dr. Schuschnigg himself, during the night at Salzburg, had tried to reach Signor Mussolini over the telephone in order to take counsel with him. And the most astonishing thing had happened: Mussolini could not be reached.

He was not available on the telephone on the Saturday, nor on Sunday, nor on the Monday.

In those momentous days Mussolini was on a ski-ing tour in the Abruzzi Mountains—Mussolini who had always made a particular point of being on the telephone within call wherever he went in case of the slightest domestic or foreign emergency, by day or by night!

Austria, in her gravest hour, was left alone.

Not before the Tuesday—when, according to schedule, the dice should have been cast—was the Duce again within reach of a telephone.

But this was not the only bad news. There was more to come. In the course of the Sunday it became known that Herr Hitler had presented Dr. Schuschnigg with an ultimatum of three days within which to fulfil the demands he had agreed to satisfy. This ultimatum was to expire on the Tuesday, February 15, at 10 P.M. Finally it became known that Herr Miklas, the

Federal President, as well as the leaders of the Patriotic Front, had refused to recognize the agreement concluded by Dr. Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden. Confusion was further deepened by the fact that even in circles the most closely connected with the Government it was impossible to obtain any more detailed information about the outcome of the interview. Official announcements about the Obersalzberg meeting, it was stated in Government quarters, would not be forthcoming either from Berlin or Vienna until February 20, when Herr Hitler would refer to them in his speech before the German Reichstag. There was still one whole week to go.

There was, however, one small consolation. Although in national circles great disappointment was felt at the outcome of the Berchtesgaden meeting, there was, for the moment, no sign of the National-Socialists celebrating a victory.

Sunday passed, and everybody was on tenterhooks. One felt that those three days between the meeting and the expiration of the ultimatum would never end. Monday and then Tuesday brought equally little news or information, and by Tuesday evening the originally hopeful and favourable outlook had reduced itself to one of sheer, black depression.

Monday, however, brought a new development in a different direction. Symptoms became apparent which indicated that all was not so well as it had seemed. Of all sections of the population, the formerly Social-Democratic working class were the only group which had more or less instantly realized that the Berchtesgaden settlement would at all events and in any circumstances be directed against them and against the institutions of democracy. In the course of Monday—that is, at a time when practically nothing was yet known of the outcome—political strikes suddenly flared up in several factories of the Floridsdorf district of Vienna. The workers declared themselves openly in favour of Dr. Schuschnigg and proclaimed their strikes as demonstrations in support of the Government against Hitler. Herr Rott, the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour, had to intervene personally to compose the conflict and to prevent the strike movement from spreading.

The Vienna Bourse opened particularly quietly on Monday morning: quotations were slightly lower than on the day before, but there was no sign of a panic. The resistance shown by the Patriotic Front to the Berchtesgaden settlement, it became known on the other hand during the day, was steadily stiffening. On Monday morning a meeting of the regional and provincial leaders of the Patriotic Front was called to hear Dr. Schuschnigg's report on the conversations. The Chancellor found himself confronted with the strange and bewildering task of defending before his most faithful followers his yielding to those demands of Herr Hitler which were antagonistic to all he and his collaborators had so far upheld as truly and unalterably Austrian. Neither did President Miklas renounce his opposition to the Obersalzberg agreement, and Dr. Schuschnigg, in the course of this one day, twice had to offer his resignation in order to persuade the President and the leaders of the Patriotic Front to adopt a less intransigent attitude. Rumours even had it on that day that Dr. Schmitz, the burgomaster of Vienna and leader of the Clericals, was to succeed Dr. Schuschnigg in the Chancellorship. The chief issue of difference between the Chancellor and the Patriotic Front was the Department for Public Security. The Patriotic Front refused in all circumstances to hand the police and gendarmery over to the new man, Dr. Seyss-Inquart, who had been nominated by Herr Hitler as Minister of the Interior. The Department of Security, they maintained, was nothing but the Trojan horse with the help of which the National-Socialists were going to hand Austria over to their comrades in the Reich. How right they were has been only too amply proved by succeeding events.

Dr. Schuschnigg had two reasons for standing out. He was the only one who knew that Herr Hitler was not bluffing this time, and that refusal would mean that he would march his troops into Austria. And secondly he was relatively pleased with Hitler's nomination of Dr. Seyss-Inquart as his representative. This man, Dr. Schuschnigg felt he had reason to hope, would be easier to handle than many others. He knew Dr. Seyss-Inquart well enough, they had done military service together with the Kaiserjaeger (Imperial Chasseurs), they were

of the same age, they were both lawyers by profession, and Seyss-Inquart enjoyed the Chancellor's personal confidence. Knowing that he was forced to accept a man of 'national' sympathies in his Cabinet he preferred Seyss-Inquart to other, and possibly much more radical, supporters of Herr Hitler. There was no doubt, however, that by now the public already felt that this nomination of any minister by Herr Hitler actually constituted an interference with Austria's home affairs, and was certainly hardly compatible with Herr Hitler's repeated assurances as to the inviolability of Austrian sovereignty.

While trying hard on the one hand, to prevent exaggerated pessimism from spreading among the population, Dr. Schuschnigg on the other hand could not run the risk of the Berchtesgaden meeting being celebrated by his followers as a "victory". Large sections of the Patriotic Front who were still completely ignorant of the true position had planned a big torchlight procession for the evening of February 13. This torchlight parade was officially cancelled. The same happened to demonstrations of sympathy for Dr. Schuschnigg, which the Patriotic Front had planned for the next day. It was absolutely essential that Dr. Schuschnigg should prevent Herr Hitler from becoming infuriated by demonstrations celebrating the Berchtesgaden meeting as a success for the Austrian Government. The cancellation of these celebrations, as far as the public had learned of them, naturally caused deep pessimism to spread among all sections of the people, a downheartedness which was still further deepened when news trickled through that serious difficulties were in the way of the reconstruction of the Cabinet. Tuesday's Bourse opened in a very depressed mood, foreign issues alone were in demand, indicating that a general flight of capital had begun. The so-called "Currency Supplements", additional taxes on foreign bonds which had been introduced following the devaluation of the schilling at a rate of 29 per cent., rose to 31 per cent. on the Monday, to 35 per cent. on the Tuesday, and to 48 per cent. on the Wednesday. As always in the past, they were a clear and unmistakable barometer of hopefulness and depression.

On Tuesday, February 15, general anxiety rose to its height. In all those circles which knew about Herr Hitler's ultimatum,



Dr. Seyss-Inquart, the first Austrian Nazi Minister, conversing with Herr Hitler in Berlin after his appointment to the Ministry of the Interior on February 17, 1938.

Wende World Photos

the sands were seen to be running out. Each new combination, in the attempt to reconstruct the Cabinet, had to be discussed at a Council of Ministers, after which it had to be put before the Leaders' Council of the Patriotic Front, and finally agreement had to be obtained by telephone from Berlin. A Council of Ministers was held in the morning, followed by a second which began at 4 P.M. and lasted, with short intervals for consultation with President Miklas, the Leaders of the Patriotic Front, and Berlin, until 2.30 A.M. without interruption.

I was in a position to watch the development of every single phase of these difficult negotiations, and it is almost impossible to convey to anyone who was not present the series of tensions and relaxations, the rising and the shattering of hopes, which succeeded one another during those hours. I remember having counted the number of alternative combinations in the list of ministers proposed and rejected during those fateful hours: they were no less than seventeen. Each combination had to be submitted to Berlin, where it was either rejected or declared as insufficient, whereupon work began afresh in Vienna, and new proposals had to be drawn up. Towards 10 P.M. it became generally known that the German ultimatum had been extended to the period of time necessary for the reconstruction of the Cabinet, and thus at least an immediate march of the German army into Austria would not take place. Another short respite was won, and many a good patriot uttered a sigh of relief.

At 10 P.M. the Council of Ministers was interrupted for a short time, and the first official announcement regarding the Berchtesgaden meeting were made over the wireless, in order to reassure public opinion. The same announcements were broadcast simultaneously from Berlin, and this as well as the fact that they contained at least an indirect recognition of Austria's independence, had a relatively quietening effect. They read as follows:

"All questions affecting the relations between Austria and the German Reich were submitted to a detailed examination in the discussion of February 12 between Dr. Schuschnigg and Herr Hitler. The aim of this discussion was to clarify the difficulties which had arisen in the operation of the Austro-

German agreement of July 11, 1936. It was agreed that both parties were resolved to keep to the principles of that agreement and to regard it as a satisfactory development of their relations.

"In this spirit, after the discussions of February 12, both parties have decided upon the immediate enforcement of measures which will ensure that a close and friendly relationship between the two countries shall be established, in furtherance of the history and of the common interests of the whole German nation. Both statesmen are of the opinion that the measures decided upon by them also represent an effective contribution to the peaceful development of the European situation."

The recognition of Austria's independence being expressly laid down in the agreement of July 11, 1936, the conclusion was justified that, since the agreement had served as a basis for the discussion, Germany had through this announcement implicitly once more demonstrated her will to respect Austria's sovereignty.

Colonel Adam, who read the announcement from the Vienna broadcasting station, added the following comment:

"In respect of the many rumours which have been current to-day, I am authorized by the Chancellor to say that the fundamental principles of the July agreement will undergo no alteration, and also that the Austrian Constitution of May 1934 and the position of the Patriotic Front are not affected. In the spirit of the Constitution and of the law governing the establishment of the Patriotic Front, a revival of parties or a splitting of the Patriotic Front into formations of a party character is excluded. Possibly the patriotic work of reconstruction may be extended to circles which have hitherto stood outside it."

Colonel Adam then appealed to the population calmly to await the announcement of the measures decided upon. "There is no question", he added, "of sensational changes, but only of measures born in the spirit of conciliation and designed to secure the peaceful development of the Austrian fatherland."

The majority of the Austrian people that night kept their radios turned on and waited for long hours in the assumption

that the formation of the new Government would yet be announced before the wireless closed down for the night. Actually the programme was extended until nearly 2 A.M., and a series of the most beautiful gramophone records was broadcast. But finally the announcement was made that the new list of Ministers would not be made public until the next morning.

Meanwhile the most excited and agitated discussions took place at the Chancellery. It is, of course, impossible to mention every one of the endless number of combinations which were suggested for a reconstruction of the Cabinet. Towards 11 P.M. a Cabinet was spoken of in well-informed circles which contained no fewer than five National-Socialists, among them Herr Hueber, brother-in-law of General Goering, who was to be Vice-Chancellor, and who, in 1930, had already for a short period been Minister of Justice (before he had joined the National-Socialists). An hour later it was suggested that there would not be even one National-Socialist in the Cabinet; and Dr. Seyss-Inquart was to be only Minister of the Interior without control of the Department of Public Security. Again an hour later it was learned that Herr Hitler had definitely insisted on a National-Socialist being appointed Minister of War, and that therefore the entire General Staff of the Federal Army had handed in their resignation.

The interesting point in all these combinations was that they all corresponded with the exact truth; they reflected exactly the various stages of negotiations which followed each other during the night while the telephone wire between Vienna and Berlin was kept busy without interruption. People were already so generally convinced that Berlin would force the new Cabinet to admit at least three National-Socialists that general relief was felt when towards 2 A.M. a "provisional definite" list of ministers was mentioned as being agreed upon, in which Dr. Seyss-Inquart as Minister of the Interior and Herr von Glaise-Horstenau (until then Minister of Public Security), as Minister without portfolio, figured as the only National-Socialists. A last-minute hitch occurred in the formation of the Cabinet when Herr Matschnigg, who was to be one of the new Secretaries of State, could not be found or reached anywhere in

Austria, and it was impossible therefore to obtain his agreement. Nevertheless, at 2.30 A.M. it was decided to draft the new list; the agreement of Herr Matschnigg was to be obtained the next day, and his appointment was to be made separately. At 3 A.M. foreign correspondents, after a day of almost indescribable strain, had decided to go home and to bed when they were called back suddenly and told that a further declaration by the Government was about to be made. It dealt with the general amnesty for National-Socialists, and read thus:

"After the reconstruction of the Cabinet, in the late hours of the night a Council of Ministers was held with the Federal Chancellor in the chair, who took the opportunity of introducing the newly appointed Ministers and Secretaries of State.

"In execution of those measures officially announced on the previous day, the Council of Ministers decided on the motion of the Federal Chancellor to submit to the Federal President a resolution providing for an amnesty for all persons sentenced for political offences. The amnesty is to comprise all political offences having taken place before February 15, 1938, in so far as the culprits have not fled the country. Political crimes committed before this date will not be persecuted, pending actions will be suspended, and terms not yet fully served will be considered with a view to shortening or suspension. In the latter cases it will be made conditional that those benefiting from the amnesty shall observe good conduct until December 31, 1941. The Ministries concerned are to work out with greatest possible expedition the measures necessary for the waiving of all administrative penalties inflicted for political offences, as well as for the cancellation of all reprimands in the way of pensions, allowances, and relief payments, and similar measures imposed for political offences in the educational system. Reinstatements into active service, however, will not be considered.

"The Federal Government have decided to take these measures, conceived in a spirit of reconciliation, in order to make it possible for them to avail themselves of the active co-operation in the reconstruction of the Fatherland of all those citizens who until now have stood aside, and thereby to safeguard, internally as well as externally, the peace of the country."

The total number of persons to benefit from the amnesty was announced as being 3200, of which about 700 were serving sentences of imprisonment, and about 2500 were to have actions pending against them suspended. The amnesty naturally comprised not only National-Socialists but also Socialists and Communists, either already sentenced, under arrest, or under investigation. It was, however, not extended to the 40,000 members of the Austrian Legion who, during the last few years, had escaped to Germany. The promulgation of this decree during the night was necessary in order that all German demands should be duly fulfilled before the expiration of the ultimatum. Of all measures the fulfilment of which had been promised to Herr Hitler only one task still remained to be tackled: the admittance of National-Socialists to co-operation in the Patriotic Front, the administration, and all other public bodies. This point, however, had at least found its settlement on principle in the amnesty decree.

The new Government, thus formed during the night of February 15, 1938, was composed of the following:

Federal Chancellor. DR. KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG.

Vice-Chancellor. FIELD-MARSHAL LUDWIG HUELGERTH.

Foreign Affairs. DR. GUIDO SCHMIDT.

Finances. DR. RUDOLF NEUMAYER.

Commerce. ENGINEER JULIUS RAAB.

Social Administration. DR. JOSEF RESCH.

Interior and Security. DR. ARTHUR SEYSS-INQUART.

Agriculture. PETER MANDORFER.

Education. DR. HANS PERNER.

Justice. PROFESSOR DR. LUDWIG VON ADAMOVICH.

Ministers without Portfolio. GUIDO ZERNATTO, DR. EDMUND GLAISE-HORSTENAU, and HANS ROTT.

Secretary of State for Defence. INFANTRY-GENERAL WILHELM ZEHNER.

Secretary of State for Security. DR. MICHAEL SKUBL.

Secretary of State for Labour. ADOLF WATZEK.

Secretary of State for Industry. COLONEL LUDWIG VON STEPSKI.

Secretary of State for Forestry. HERR MATSCHENIGG.

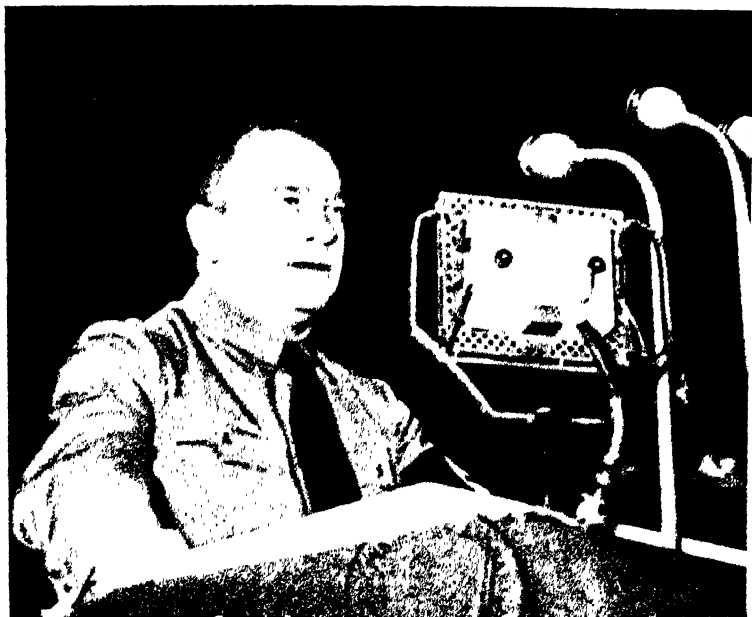
This list is reproduced here in full because it shows, besides members of the old Cabinet, a number of entirely new names. These new men were, as also became known during the night, not exclusively National-Socialists: there were some Social Democrats among them. As National-Socialists were to be regarded Dr. Seyss-Inquart, Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, and Dr. Neumayer (who had also been a member of the previous Cabinet), all of whom were to remain members of the Government after its reconstruction on March 11, under Dr. Seyss-Inquart. Representatives of the workers were Herr Watzek, a Social Democrat, and Herr Rott and Herr Matschnigg, both representatives of the Christian Trade Unions. Dr. Zernatto, who until then had been Secretary-General of the Patriotic Front and Secretary of State, was raised to the rank of minister as a concession to the Patriotic Front; while on the other hand, in deference to Herr Hitler, Dr. Schmidt, hitherto only Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was made Foreign Minister.

The first impression gained, after the eventful night had passed and pressure from Berlin seemed to have somewhat subsided, was that in the circumstances the solution arrived at could be regarded as a lesser evil than many.

This impression, however, reckoned without Dr. Seyss-Inquart, a man made of quite different stuff from Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, who, since July 1936, had already belonged to the Cabinet as Herr Hitler's man of confidence.

The amnesty made effective during the following days brought back into the field of subversive activity at one single stroke all those old fighters of the National-Socialist party who had only waited for this day. Among those immediately released were Dr. Rintelen, Captain Leopold, Dr. Tavs, and all those participants in the *putsch* of July 1934 who had not been executed. Although it had been understood that the majority of the released men would go to Germany, where they were to be given leading positions, a good number of them—and, above all, Dr. Rintelen—remained in Austria, where immediately all available forces were set to work.

The extraordinary speed and thoroughness with which Dr. Seyss-Inquart set to his task deserves to be mentioned here.



Herr Josef Buerckel, German Reich Commissar for Austria, during a speech made in Vienna on March 26, 1938.



Dr. Anton Rintelen, former governor of Styria, Austrian Ambassador to Rome, and leader of the Styrian National Socialists.

Having obviously carefully prepared and elaborated all his plans weeks previously, he was able, after a night spent almost entirely awake, to carry out on the morning of February 16 his whole programme in every little detail. During the morning he took charge of the Ministry of the Interior and the Vienna police headquarters, established without the least delay a branch office of the German secret police in a building of their own, established the National-Socialist section of the Patriotic Front, had himself elected as its deputy chairman, and held several conferences with representatives and confidants of the National-Socialist party who had been urgently called to Vienna from all parts of Austria. On the same evening he took the train to Berlin—to report to Herr Hitler the reconstruction of the Cabinet and the measures taken by himself.

Already that same evening well-informed quarters let it be understood that all telephone conversations were being overheard by agents of the newly established secret police. It was common knowledge that all private telephones invariably produced a strange and unusual crackling noise when connected, sufficient proof that someone was listening in, long-distance calls were recorded on gramophone records at the order of Dr. Seyss-Inquart, and the police and gendarmery had received special orders not to interfere with National-Socialist activity—all facts which nobody took the trouble to conceal.

Dr. Seyss-Inquart had done more than a good single day's work!

Dr. Rintelen and other National-Socialist leaders who felt their time had come, were hardly less active. Until February 16 Dr. Rintelen had been confined to his bed in hospital still suffering from the consequences of the wounds which he had inflicted upon himself on July 25, 1934, at the Vienna War Ministry while pretending to attempt suicide. He recovered quickly from his suffering the moment he saw himself about to step back into freedom. He took the first available train to his native province of Styria, where he set out feverishly at Bruck-an-der-Mur and Kapfenberg (Upper Styria) to reorganize all National-Socialist forces. Within less than a week he succeeded in not only rebuilding in Styria all the old organizations set up by him four years previously but also in inspiring immediately

in the district that general frenzy of activity which spread in the days which followed like wildfire over the rest of Austria. By February 24 his organizing work was complete to such a degree that in Graz open revolt was ready to break out.

But that, it must be remembered, was only a week later.

And that week was all but bare of events.

Dr. Schuschnigg's new Government, formed with the active help of the Berlin Foreign Office and the central leadership of the National-Socialist party in Berlin, actually proved to be no more than government by the grace of Hitler. From its very first day it was forced into almost complete inactivity, being totally paralysed by the fact that its ministers had split into two diametrically opposed factions. Dr. Schuschnigg, accustomed during several years of office to all his wishes being carried out by his Cabinet without question or delay, from February 16 onwards was confronted with the opposing will of Dr. Seyss-Inquart inspired by Berlin. For fear of jeopardizing from the very beginning the whole Berchtesgaden agreement, Dr. Schuschnigg was compelled to give Dr. Seyss-Inquart a free hand at least for the moment, and to defer to him the more when he returned from Berlin with new instructions from Herr Hitler in his pocket.

Thus during the following two weeks absurd situations arose repeatedly in which the Ministry of the Interior issued orders to the police about their attitude towards National-Socialist activity, which Dr. Schuschnigg found necessary to revoke, but which had shortly afterwards to be issued again through Dr. Seyss-Inquart's pressure. Regulations concerning the control of the Press were made, withdrawn, and reissued similarly. General Goering's paper, the *Essener Nationalzeitung*, which was officially admitted into Austria, was confiscated by Dr. Schuschnigg on February 17, but the ban was immediately lifted by a telegram sent from Berlin by Dr. Seyss-Inquart.

In responsible quarters no one had any doubt about the importance which had to be attached to this split in the Cabinet. February 17 brought more alarming news. Signor Toscanini, in a telegram from New York, informed the Government that in view of the new course of events in Austria he refused to

conduct either in Salzburg or anywhere else in Austria. That same morning it was learned that Dr. Klenbacher, the President of the Austrian National Bank, and the recognized guarantor of Austrian currency stability, had offered his resignation, which was, however, not accepted by Dr. Schuschnigg; and that the whole incident was not to be published in the Austrian Press.

Meanwhile in Berlin the reaction which Germany's first wilful and indisputable act of interference in Austria's independence would produce abroad was awaited with anxious suspense. The reaction was shattering; it fully and amply bore out all those of Herr Hitler's advisers who had always maintained that the Stresa Powers, once the grave necessity arose, would never so much as lift a finger for Austria. Dealing with the attitude of the Stresa Powers *The Times* of February 17, 1938, under the heading "Silence of the Powers", came to an apt and neat conclusion. "The Great Powers, which in former years were wont to express concern for Austrian independence, are now silent, and the part played by Italy in 1934, when she threatened to counter force, if need be, with force, is now un-filled." That indeed was the international position put into few but all the more explicit words.

On the preceding day, February 16, a number of questions had already been put in the House of Commons to Mr. Eden, then Foreign Secretary, concerning the situation in Austria. Mr. Eden answered them with a statement of the fact that a meeting had taken place at Berchtesgaden, declared that he had not been favoured with an official report on these conversations, and added: "His Majesty's Government are meanwhile closely following developments."

These questions were repeated in the House of Commons on the following day, February 17, when Mr. Eden in his reply intimated that the British Government would be prepared to take joint steps with other powers in regard to the situation in Austria, but let it be understood that such steps would only be taken if the Italian Government were to take the initiative; for Italy, according to the Stresa agreement, had been given the mandate for the defence of Austrian independence. The

only positive points made by Mr. Eden in his statement of February 17 were contained in the following phrase: "While at the present moment I am not in a position to estimate the exact effect of this agreement, his Majesty's Government are following developments with close attention, and his Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin has already been instructed to indicate to the German Government the interest which his Majesty's Government take and have always taken in the Austrian question." In reply to a supplementary question he added: "In view of the particular circumstances of the Stresa declaration, we are willing to act with others, but do not think it lies with us to take the initiative."

In Paris no official attitude was made known at all.

In Rome, however, which had actually charged itself with the responsibility for Austria, opinions were voiced which were clear enough. On February 17 the official *Informazione Diplomatica* declared: "Commentaries published in the international press and reflecting upon the attitude of Italy towards events in Austria are absurd. In responsible Italian circles the conversations at Berchtesgaden, as well as the decisions taken by Chancellor Dr. Schuschnigg, are regarded as the natural development of relations between Germany and Austria, as laid down in the agreement of July 11, 1936, on the basis of sincere and mutual collaboration between both countries.

"In that agreement the essential character of Austro-German relations is expressed in Austria's precise declaration that she is and regards herself as a German State. The Fascist Government has always regarded friendly relations and close collaboration between the two German States as corresponding not only with the immutable conditions of reality, but with the essential interests of peace and tranquility in Central Europe. Italy has always guarded and defended these interests, and for that reason supported the task audaciously undertaken by Dr. Schuschnigg *in full agreement with herself*. His achievement will award him the support of all those in favour of a policy of agreement and peace in Europe."

To this, the semi-official *Giornale d'Italia* added verbally: "Italy cannot but welcome this new agreement with the liveliest cordiality, on account of the profound friendship which

binds her to both the signatory States, and of the notable contribution which it makes to the policy of peace and collaboration in Europe."

Of the pressure which had been brought to bear on Dr. Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden the Italian Press made no mention.

A ray of hopeful light shone through the clouds of Austria and the haze of misunderstanding which shrouded Europe on the evening of February 17, 1938. The Austrian workers decided suddenly to give their full support to Dr. Schuschnigg. A meeting of representatives of all Austrian workers' unions (including the former Social Democratic unions) as well as delegates of all Vienna's chief industries was held at the Vienna trade-union house, and adopted unanimously the following resolution in support of Dr. Schuschnigg:

"The representatives of all Austria's workers' unions, having met to consider grave and serious issues, express their passionate determination to stand united for the freedom, the independence, and the dignity of Austria. This conference repeats and emphasizes once more the solemn declaration made to the Federal Chancellor, Dr. Kurt von Schuschnigg, by the leaders of the Trade Unions' Association, that in his fight to safeguard the future of Austria and to protect her peaceful reconstruction, he may count upon the unlimited support of Austria's workers, who are ready to make every sacrifice to further these aims. Austria's workers want peace, but they do not want peace at any price. We Austrians are well able to look after our own house, with our own free and independent will, according to our own principles, and in our own way."

Since the events of February 1934 the Austrian working class had succeeded, after endless negotiations, in obtaining permission to form within the framework of the Patriotic Front a group of their own, the "Social Working Community" which was to pursue its work on lines similar to those of the "National Political Committee" of the National-Socialists. According to the Berchtesgaden agreement the scope of activity of the latter had now to be enlarged considerably, and in an official announcement of February 18 the principal lines of

settlement of this question—the fulfilment of Dr. Schuschnigg's third undertaking with Herr Hitler—were laid down as follows:

“On the basis of the agreement reached at Berchtesgaden the Austrian National-Socialists will enjoy legality of activity on an equal footing with all other Austrian institutions, but only on the basis of the constitution, which now as heretofore precludes political activity. From the Reich, in execution of the existing ban, measures will be taken to preclude interference by party quarters in Austrian domestic affairs, in order to contribute by this means to peaceful development.”

This declaration provided the National-Socialists with the possibility not only of collaboration within the Patriotic Front but also of election to provincial diets and town councils, and wards and other governing bodies. It was now only natural that Dr. Schuschnigg should be approached by the “Social Working Community” with the demand that henceforth they should be granted the same rights as the National-Socialists. Negotiations, however, at first had to be postponed by Dr. Schuschnigg, who was occupied with other urgent tasks. Herr Hitler was to speak before the German Reichstag on February 20 on world politics and the Berchtesgaden agreement, and Dr. Schuschnigg consequently had to prepare his answering speech which he was to deliver in Vienna four days later.

Official reasons given for Dr. Seyss-Inquart's prolonged stay in Berlin were that the Austrian Minister of the Interior was to draft together with Herr Hitler the exact phrasing of the passage in Herr Hitler's speech which was to refer to Austria. But that was not all. Dr. Seyss-Inquart took the opportunity during his stay in Berlin of having prolonged conversations with Herr Himmler, Chief of the German Police, and Herr Frick, German Minister of the Interior. The mere drafting of the references to Austria in Herr Hitler's speech on February 20 cannot have taken long and indeed can have hardly justified in itself Dr. Seyss-Inquart's journey, since all Herr Hitler said about Austria on February 20 was:

“I am happy to be able to inform you, my deputies, that during the last few days further understanding has been reached with the country to which we are for many reasons

particularly closely attached. It is not only the same people, it is above all the same long history and the same culture which bind the German Reich and German Austria together. The difficulties which have arisen in the execution of the agreement of July 11, 1936, compelled us to make another effort to remove all those obstacles and mis-understandings which stood in the way of a final and definite reconciliation. For it was evident that a situation which had become intolerable would one day, whether intentionally or not, create conditions leading to a grave catastrophe. Once things have gone so far it lies more often than not no longer in the power of man to check a fateful development which through negligence or lack of wisdom has started to take its course.

"I am happy to be able to state also that this view was shared by the Austrian Federal Chancellor whom I had asked to see me. The idea and purpose of our meeting were to arrive at a relaxation of tension in our mutual relations by granting those sections of the Austrian people who share the National-Socialist *Weltanschauung* the same rights as those which are, within the existing laws, accorded to their citizens. In conjunction with this step measures for pacification were to be taken which, by way of a general amnesty and a better understanding of both countries, would lead in the spirit of friendship to a closer political, personal, and economic co-operation. All this constitutes merely an addition to the agreement of July 11, 1936.

"I desire to express to the Austrian Chancellor at this hour before the German people my sincerest thanks for the great understanding and the cordial readiness with which he accepted my invitation and endeavoured, together with myself, to find a way which would meet the interests not only of our two people but also of the one great German people whose sons we all are, irrespective of where our cradles have stood. And I am convinced that in doing so we have made a substantial contribution to European peace."

All Vienna, all Austria had clung to the wireless that afternoon and listened to Herr Hitler's speech. Between 1 and 4 P.M. the streets of Vienna were completely deserted, everyone waiting anxiously to hear what concessions Herr Hitler would

announce in return for the measures carried out by Dr. Schuschnigg.

Disappointment in non-National-Socialist circles could not have been more shattering. Not one single concession had been announced. Herr Hitler had not even gone so far as recognizing the independence of Austria but had merely referred once to the Berchtesgaden agreement in which, in fact, the sovereignty of Austria had been guaranteed. Apart from this the short reference to Austria in the speech disclosed quite clearly the threatening nature of the atmosphere which had overhung the Obersalzberg negotiations. The only positive thing was a word of thanks to Dr. Schuschnigg. No more.

But the National-Socialists in Austria knew what it meant. Strolling down the Ringstrasse some two hours after the speech I noticed that for the first time within my memory the huge gates of the outer "Burgtor" between the Ring and the Heldenplatz and the Hofburg had been closed and were guarded by police. A few minutes later the first National-Socialist demonstration since the ban on the carrying of swastika flags came marching up the Ring from the Schwarzenbergplatz and proceeded towards the Burg and Parliament-house. There may not have been more than a few hundred demonstrators, mostly youngsters between fifteen and twenty-one, but they created considerable excitement by shouting slogans like "Heil Hitler", "We thank you, our leader!", and "One people, one Reich, one Leader!" They were flanked on either side by police who, however, marched quietly along with them without interfering. It was the first National-Socialist demonstration in Vienna since the ban on the party in 1933 to proceed with the silent acquiescence of the police. In the course of their procession along the Ring the original comparatively small group of demonstrators was joined by something between a thousand and two thousand onlookers who linked up with it. When it reached the Votivkirche speeches were made, and there were curiously enough loud cheers not only for Hitler but also for Dr. Schuschnigg.

Similar demonstrations took place in Linz and Graz where the demonstrators alternately broke forth into "Heil Hitler", "Heil Schuschnigg", and "Heil Austria". A demon-

at Muerzzuschlag in Styria took a particularly grotesque form, the crowds shouting not only "Heil Hitler" and "Heil Schuschnigg", but also with no less emphasis "Heil Dollfuss!"

After about an hour the demonstrators dispersed in complete orderliness and quiet. That same afternoon, however, something very significant happened to me while going home in a bus. Among the passengers was a National-Socialist wearing a big metal swastika on his watch-chain. Every half minute or so he would pull the watch out of his waist-pocket and ask his fellow passengers to admire it. When I smilingly gave him to understand that I was not interested, and two other passengers did the same, he suddenly burst into the most abusive language, informing us that all those who were not for Hitler would now soon see what was going to happen to them.

The next day, Monday, February 21, the National-Socialist demonstrations were repeated, this time in a much less mild and harmless form, not only the Hitlerites but also large sections of the mob and rabble having judged from the silent tolerance of the party by the police that the hour of open rioting in the streets had come. At Graz the results of Dr. Rintelen's propaganda showed their first unmistakable signs when Herr Hitler's supporters marched not only with their swastika flags but appeared in many places in their uniforms of the S.A. and the S.S.

Dr. Seyss-Inquart's control over public life had in the meantime become sensibly more tightened. More and more telephones were tapped, and at the Chancellery it was learned that all telephone conversations which Dr. Schuschnigg had had with the Austrian diplomatic representatives in London, Amsterdam, and the Scandinavian countries had been overheard and recorded on gramophone records. The Government was compelled to have another telephone line laid in great haste *via* Switzerland and France in order to maintain undisturbed contact with its embassies abroad.

New and imposing demonstrations by the National-Socialists were announced on February 22, and at the same time molestations of those sections of the public which supported the Government became increasingly frequent. Dr. Schuschnigg, having convinced himself that he could no longer watch things idly, decided to resort to counter-measures. A pass had been reached.

Schuschnigg's Counter-offensive and Fall

THREE CONDITIONS appeared imperative to prevent chaos:

- (1) The restoration of order and the avoidance of further demonstrations;
- (2) A determined stand against further National-Socialist encroachments;
- (3) The restoration of hope and confidence among the population to prevent the outbreak of panic.

During the following three days Dr. Schuschnigg worked only to create those conditions. His efforts actually proved successful for about a week, after which all his orders were consistently countermanded by Dr. Seyss-Inquart.

On the morning of February 22, 1938, a general ban on all meetings was decreed by Dr. Schuschnigg. The decree ran as follows:

"In execution of the measures agreed upon during the Berchtesgaden conversations the Federal Government of Austria have taken a series of measures intended to promote a concentration of all those forces willing to contribute to the reconstruction of the State.

"In order to bring about a peaceful and orderly execution of these measures, and to preclude all possible disturbances, a general ban on meetings is decreed for the period of four weeks beginning February 22, 1938. During this period all meetings and demonstrations in public will be forbidden, with the exception of those organized by the Patriotic Front and its organizations, and irrespective of whether they are intended to be held indoors or outdoors."

This ban was decreed in time to prevent the holding of a National-Socialist "German Day" at Linz two days later. First it was postponed until February 27, and finally it had to be cancelled altogether. This "German Day" had been intended to take the form of a vast review of all National-Socialist troops

and units in Austria with the support of strong contingents from Bavaria, and a great feast of brotherhood was to take place. The ban on meetings had at least the one favourable result, namely, that in Vienna all big demonstrations were prevented from taking place until the end of the month. In Graz, however, things took a different turn.

In order to put a check on all National-Socialist outrages and interference with public life, on the wearing of the swastika and the "Heil Hitler" salute, Dr. Seyss-Inquart was called upon to address his followers over the wireless. He broadcast at 1 P.M. on February 22, and his message was repeated several times from records during the same as well as the following day. This message became instantly conspicuous by its opening: "Austrians, Comrades of the People! (*Volksgenossen*)."

He began by emphasizing that hopeful enthusiasm had been aroused by the results of the Obersalzberg meeting in all those sections of the German people in Austria who in his (the Minister's) view supported the National-Socialist idea in their feelings and thoughts. "Demonstrations of joy broke spontaneously on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, and have given true expression to these feelings. But we have more to do than merely celebrate when we are about to set on a new road." Referring to the necessity of concentrating all forces willing to contribute to the reconstruction of the Fatherland, he closed his message with the following words:

"Austrian National-Socialists will have to bear in mind that the national emblems of the German Reich and its hymns must not be used for the purpose of demonstration, which in the true National-Socialist spirit would amount to an abuse of them. Here as elsewhere you will have to wait for definite regulations to be introduced. Equally the National-Socialist salute may not be made in cases where it is intended not so much as an expression of individual views but could be taken as a provocation of persons holding different views. For legal National-Socialist activity all channels will henceforth be open. Consequently there is neither room for, nor sense in, any activity forbidden according to the existing law, and all such activity will remain forbidden. This is neither the moment nor the occasion for the pronouncement of political declarations. On February 24 the

Federal Chancellor, Dr. Schuschnigg, as responsible leader of Austrian policy, will define his attitude towards the events of February 12. Only then will the moment have come to employ all forces in the service of the entire German people and the Austrian Fatherland."

Dr. Schuschnigg and his followers were convinced that this message of their leader would make the position clear to the Austrian National-Socialists and leave no doubt that the party and its emblems remained forbidden. They had, however, not reckoned with the possibility that Dr. Seyss-Inquart's words might also be given an entirely different interpretation by his supporters, who indeed concluded from them that the swastika and the Hitler salute were to be banned only during demonstrations, their use "in private" still being permitted. They drew the implication as well, from the final words of the speech, that after Dr. Schuschnigg had spoken the time would come for them "to employ all forces for the German people". And to this interpretation they adhered more than to the letter.

In order to check the general spread of panic, particularly among Austria's Jews, Dr. Schuschnigg received as late as on February 22 a delegation of Austrian Jews headed by the President of the Vienna *Kultusgemeinde*, Dr. Desider Friedmann, and its Vice-President, Dr. Oppenheim. He gave them extensive assurances that National Socialism in Austria would not be allowed, as long as he (Dr. Schuschnigg) had anything to say, to interfere in the very slightest way with the life of the Jews. The Jewish representatives, on their part, declared their readiness to lend support to Dr. Schuschnigg with all means at their disposal. This promise made by the Jewish representatives was duly and amply fulfilled a fortnight later, and after Herr Hitler's entry into Vienna brought the most catastrophic revenge upon Austria's entire Jewry.

Finally Dr. Schuschnigg decided, still on the same day, to enter into completely fresh negotiations with the Austrian working class. Following their demonstration of confidence of the previous week and after they had learned of Dr. Schuschnigg's readiness to accept their demands as a basis of negotiations, a second resolution was adopted by the trade unions and workers' associations. A proclamation was posted in all factories and in-

dustries by representatives of the trade unions, and signatures collected. The proclamation read as follows:

"In the name of the employees represented by them, the representatives of the workers and employees declare that they are ready and prepared to take up at any time the struggle for the maintenance of a free and independent Austria, in which they themselves will be free and independent, and to co-operate unconditionally with all those who are willing to enter the struggle with them. Any threat to Austria's independence will, in their view, entail not only consequences harmful to the social, political, and economic status of the working class, but will also increase the danger of a European war with all its terrible consequences for our country. The representatives are conscious of the fact that the struggle for the freedom and independence of Austria will be a very arduous one, which will depend upon the solidarity and unanimous enthusiasm of the entire truly Austrian people. In this respect the workers will know no differences of creed or of opinion, and stand ready and united with their representatives behind the Federal Chancellor, for an independent, free, social and German Austria."

The proclamation remained not without effect. More than 1,400,000 Austrian workers—that is, almost one-quarter of the entire population—during the next few days put their signatures to it. For the first time large battalions of workers took part in the big march of the Patriotic Front to Parliament-house on the eve of Dr. Schuschnigg's speech on February 24, and with genuine enthusiasm listened to the Chancellor's words. They broke into thundering applause when Dr. Schuschnigg declared that in the event of a struggle between employers and workers he would always and unconditionally stand on the side of the workers.

But the most definite measure he took to bring about an appeasement of the general atmosphere throughout Austria was the speech he made that same evening before the Austrian Federal Diet.

Dr. Schuschnigg's speech lasted for more than two hours. A thorough and detailed explanation of what he was striving for would have necessitated the reproduction of his speech *in toto*.

Here we shall have to confine ourselves to its indispensable parts.¹

The Chancellor declared the only item on the agenda of that day's sitting was "Austria".

"The Government," he said, "and all its members stand immovably upon the foundation of the Constitution of May 1, 1934. They consider it therefore their first and self-evident duty with all their strength to maintain the unimpaired liberty and independence of the Austrian Fatherland. They conceive their task to be the safeguarding, with all the means at their disposal, of the peace with outside countries and the maintenance and spreading of the peace at home."

He went on to say that the meaning of German Austria was that Austrians were to be "good Germans and faithful Austrians ever and always", and that this was the principle the Government had chosen for their guidance.

"The Constitution," he continued, "recognizes no parties and no party state." [This reference was meant to preclude, in the event of general elections, the constitution of a Government from representatives of political parties.] "What we in Austria want, cannot and must not be classified according to the political terms of right and left, or to the political colours of red and black and brown and green. Ours is not a party-bound Popular Front, but the united, close front of our people in all its social strata and classes. The service of this common front of Austrians, its realization and its maintenance, are both the aim and the programme of the Government."

Describing Austria's German mission, Dr. Schuschnigg then went on to say that there had never been any reason for difference between the Reich and the Danubian Republic, since Austria had merely fulfilled her own German mission in a different and higher sense than the Reich.

"And in spite of it all, there has ensued a fratricidal struggle of suffering and terror, no less painful and no less embittered in its various phases than in any unhappy period of the past. And this fratricidal struggle, with its peaks and its troughs of passion, with its untold sacrifices, with its destruction and its alienation of mankind, with its blood-bespattered trails of hatred, with its

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 281.

arrows of poisoned argument, has raged in Austria a full five years."

It is obvious that Dr. Schuschnigg could not help in this short characterization but describe and thereby denounce the methods of strife employed by the Third Reich in Austria. He continued by attempting to nail down Herr Hitler to his own words and to lend the Reichstag speech of the Fuehrer of February 20 just that specific interpretation which Herr Hitler himself had been careful to avoid. He said:

"The conclusion of peace after a five-years' fratricidal struggle was the meaning and purpose of the meeting at Berchtesgaden on the 12th February of this year. The Chancellor and Fuehrer of the German Reich declared in his great speech to the German nation on the 20th February of this year, in reference to the results of the interview at Berchtesgaden, that these agreements were complementary to the arrangement of 11th July, 1936, difficulties which had arisen in the execution of that arrangement having made compulsory an attempt to remove misunderstandings and obstacles to a final reconciliation. The arrangement of 1936 which, accordingly, is viewed by both partners to the agreement as furnishing a basis for the Berchtesgaden interview, contains in the first place the positive declaration of the Chancellor and Fuehrer of the German Reich that the German Reich's Government recognizes the full sovereignty of the Austrian Federal State. It furthermore contains the declaration that each Government considers the internal political organization existing in the other country, including the position of Austrian National Socialism, as an internal affair of the other country, which it would not try to influence either directly or indirectly. It finally contains the declaration that the Austrian Federal Government would continue to keep its policy generally, and especially in regard to the German Reich, along that fundamental line which befits and becomes an Austria professing to be a German State.

"As it is now a matter of the past, it would seem superfluous to examine in detail why the proposed way, by itself, did not lead to the desired success. It would be an easy matter, in the light of a thorough exposure of prevailing circumstances, to analyse, if need there were, developments up to February 1938

and the ultimate causes of the present renewed and increasingly threatened tension." [It was this passage which primarily prompted Herr Hitler, on March 11, to have Dr. Schuschnigg arrested. Being in possession of the relevant documents, it would indeed have been an easy matter for him at any moment to give ample and fully convincing proof of the guilt and responsibility of the National-Socialists in every single case.] "The real reason, speaking summarily, lay in the fact that certain interested Austrian parties thought it proper to disturb and poison inter-State relations through spreading false information, and, as was apparent in a number of pamphlets which were circulated as late as the beginning of the current year,¹ to distort the sense of the arrangement of 11th July and the plainly declared will of the Reich's Chancellor and Fuehrer, in order to reawaken illegal activities aiming at the re-establishment of conditions such as existed prior to the 11th July, 1936.

"But that too belongs now to the past. The new agreement has been concluded, and it is our fervent wish that it will wholly fulfil what both parties expect of it.

"We have now furnished ample proof of our goodwill and confidence. We have invited the formerly party-bound Social Democrats to co-operate in the Patriotic Front. We have offered the formerly party-bound National-Socialists and the members of all other groups the opportunity of co-operation under identical conditions.

"On the part of the German Reich, the assurance has simultaneously been repeated that necessary provisions shall be made for non-interference in the internal political affairs of Austria, in such a manner that the Reich's Government is ready actually to take measures which shall prevent German interference in the internal affairs of Austria. It has been agreed and stipulated that illegal activities in Austria shall not be protected in any way by foreign authorities and will enjoy no toleration on the part of the Austrian Federal Government; but that, on the contrary, every unlawful activity will of necessity be punished by the law. Let this be a final declaration on this point because it seems particularly noteworthy for a special reason.

"I have spoken of an honest peace. It would have been dis-

¹ This refers to the Tavs Documents.

honest had it turned out, as certain Austrians predicted but a short time ago, speaking of the invalidity of the Austrian Constitution and of men in the leadership of the State having broken their oaths, to be one of force and terror and of the reinstatement of parties. It was an honest peace because the principles which we have always upheld in connexion with the Constitution and the Front, in other words, with the foundations of our State construction, have remained unaltered.

"We know exactly that we were able to go, and did go, to that limit beyond which, clearly and unequivocally, appear the words: 'So far and no farther.'"

"We have not hesitated to go as far as that limit because, trusting in the words and in the personality of the Fuehrer and Chancellor, who successfully guides the destinies of the great German Reich, we have decided to walk a common road with him."

"I wish to lay great stress upon the declaration that, fully conscious of my responsibility and with a thorough consideration of the vital interests and the peaceful existence of our Fatherland, I am ready, without any mental reservation and with entire clearness of purpose, to pledge the Austrian word."

By way of reply to the masses of figures which, four days previously, Herr Hitler had quoted as an illustration of his gigantic work of reconstruction in Germany, Dr. Schuschnigg then dwelt on the achievements of Austria's national economy which, practically speaking, proved in many respects to be considerably more impressive than that of the Reich, at the conclusion of which Dr. Schuschnigg could not help dealing a little personal hit to Herr Hitler when he remarked: "Certainly not bad for a little country like ours! "

These words, although greeted with uproarious applause and laughter from the audience, were however left out of the official text of the speech. Turning next to the necessity for social peace, Dr. Schuschnigg went on to say:

"A struggle for political supremacy—let me state this without reserve—between individual groups, no matter what their political convictions may be, I shall oppose with all the means at my command, because the country cannot stand such a struggle for supremacy and needs quiet.

"No longer must there be any class fronts. But if this appeal should prove of no avail, if any kind of front should be established, if workmen were brought into conflict with the intelligentsia, you will always find me in the camp of the workman!"

Having once more made it clear beyond doubt that he proposed to stand or fall with the entirety of his programme, he closed his speech with the words:

"Until death, Red-White-Red! Austria!"

Dr. Schuschnigg's speech was received with almost boundless enthusiasm by the crowds of hundreds of thousands who had gathered before Parliament-house and around the public loud-speakers which had been erected in all the public squares. New hope seemed to be held out by it, and the majority of the Austrian people, faithful to Dr. Schuschnigg, regained for one night and for the following day the confidence of which there had been so little during the previous fortnight.

But only for a night and a day.

Because, masterly as it was in conception and rendering, much as it fulfilled its purpose of reassuring his supporters, Dr. Schuschnigg's speech had lacked one essential feature: diplomatic skill.

After his "hard day at Berchtesgaden", as he had described it in the course of his speech, Dr. Schuschnigg remained still so deeply embittered that he could not bring himself to pronounce the name Hitler even a single time in the course of his whole speech. He had not been able to bring himself to thank Herr Hitler, although Herr Hitler himself in his own speech four days previously had expressly extended his gratitude to the Austrian Chancellor. Besides his speech was full of sarcastic hints at Herr Hitler's speech which were all too well understood not only by his listeners in Austria but also by the National-Socialist party in Germany. Though such had never been Dr. Schuschnigg's intention, his speech was taken by Herr Hitler as being a gauntlet flung down. And Herr Hitler, indeed, did not hesitate so much as a second to pick it up.

In the streets of Vienna wild enthusiasm prevailed after

Schuschnigg's speech. Wherever National-Socialist demonstrators showed themselves in public they were instantly beaten up by groups of workers and supporters of the Patriotic Front and chased home. The Federal provinces however offered a rather different picture. While in Linz and Innsbruck the National-Socialists contented themselves with holding, after the supporters of the Patriotic Front had withdrawn, large but completely orderly demonstrations, at Graz things took a sharp turn.

By the time Dr. Schuschnigg had begun his speech a crowd of more than one thousand National-Socialists had gathered round the loud-speaker on the main square at Graz, and the moment the Chancellor had spoken his first words had demanded that the swastika flag be hoisted on the Graz town-hall. Dr. Schmidt, the burgomaster of Graz, who had strong sympathies with the National-Socialists, in spite of being sternly warned by the Provincial Governor and the police, complied with the demand. When Dr. Schuschnigg in his speech referred to the "recognition of Austria's independence by the Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor", the National-Socialists in front of the Graz town-hall demanded that the loud-speaker should be immediately switched off. This demand was equally conceded by Dr. Schmidt, the burgomaster. The loud-speaker was put out of service, there followed the most noisy brawls, and scenes of fighting between National-Socialists and supporters of Dr. Schuschnigg in the streets of the town.

This incident was the signal for the Styrian National-Socialists, who had been well organized by Dr. Rintelen, to take up the open struggle with the Government. The following day the students at Graz university without exception appeared in the lecture-halls wearing the forbidden swastika badge, and terror in the streets became so rife that no one, not even a woman or a child, not wearing his swastika, escaped a pitiless beating up by National-Socialists. The local police were naturally not strong enough to cope with all these incidents, and when the Graz National-Socialists, under the leadership of Professor Dadieu, planned a mass meeting of National-Socialists from the whole of Styria for Sunday, February 27, the Government despatched strong detachments of armed forces to the Styrian capital. Three battalions of the Vienna Hausregiment were sent at first, but

they had shortly to be followed by a large contingent of Vienna police, one armoured train, and a squadron of military aeroplanes. The troops at once mounted machine-guns in the streets of Graz, barbed-wire fences were erected in all thoroughfares, bombing aeroplanes circled above the town, all special trains reserved for the National-Socialists were prevented from leaving, and all signs of demonstrations suppressed with the strongest possible measures. The National-Socialist mass meeting therefore did not take place, and even after this alarming prelude the days following February 24, passed sensibly more quietly at Graz than had been expected.

Yet the incidents at Graz were the first signs of an organized outbreak, which during the decisive days leading up to March 11 spread to all parts of Austria. Following the example of Graz, new formations of National-Socialists with swastika badges and armlets, partly even wearing uniforms of the S.A. and S.S., were organized at Linz, where during the following days demonstrations and brawls occurred, for which great numbers of unemployed and idle camp-followers from the country had been recruited by the National-Socialist organizations.

Meanwhile the former "National Political Committee" in the Patriotic Front had undergone reorganization. Besides Dr. Seyss-Inquart and Dr. Pembaur, Dr. Jury (a doctor from St. Poelten and a well-known agitator) had been placed at the head of this body. He began his activity on the very first day by circularizing questionnaires among all parts of the population to find out which sections of the people most strongly professed National-Socialist ideas. Signatures were collected at the same time not only for the purpose of canvassing for new members and thereby filling the ranks of the organization, but also to stress the renewed demand for the holding of general elections.

Since the negotiations between Dr. Schuschnigg and the Social Working Community, the workers' organization, were still in their initial stage, and Christian Social and Monarchist organizations could not yet even think of displaying stronger propagandist activity, the field was left almost exclusively to the National-Socialists, who during those first days after their readmission to the Patriotic Front made full use of their opportunities and pursued a vigorous and comprehensive propaganda

campaign. As early as the last days of February, all departments of the civil service received lists which civil servants and other employees were asked to fill in, declaring their attitude towards National Socialism, and National-Socialist representatives in the civil service spared no hints to their colleagues of the attitude which would be adopted by National-Socialist ministers who would presently come into office towards, from their own point of view, recalcitrant members of their staff. This mild form of unofficial blackmail, in many cases, did not fall short of its purpose.

Nevertheless the last days of February passed in comparative quiet, the National-Socialists being primarily concerned with enlarging and strengthening their internal organization and in securing the necessary financial support. Abundant funds for them poured into Austria from Germany. Hardly a day went by without special emissaries arriving from Munich and Berlin, bringing new instructions and plans and funds. Dr. Tavs and Captain Leopold, released under the amnesty, had been put over the frontier into Germany. On February 28 they suddenly reappeared in Vienna, declaring themselves to be "on leave", and accompanied by Herr Schattenfroh, one of the earlier leaders of the Austro-Nazis. From the day of their arrival National-Socialist propaganda suddenly increased to an alarming degree in speed and effectiveness, and all their organizations seemed suddenly to be in the possession of almost inexhaustible funds.

Such was the practical expression of Herr Hitler's non-interference in Austria. It would have been wrong to call it little short of a campaign!

On February 28, Signor Ghighi, the Italian Ambassador to Vienna, who had of late observed a more than marked restraint in his relations with official circles, suddenly paid a surprise visit to Dr. Schuschnigg and Dr. Schmidt. Details of their conversations have never been made known, but in spite of this secrecy it was learned that Signor Ghighi had informed Dr. Schuschnigg that Signor Mussolini would like to see Austro-German tension a little less in the foreground for the period of duration of his negotiations for an Anglo-Italian Pact. Should Dr. Schuschnigg succeed in safely getting over the next two months—that is,

until after the conclusion of the Pact between Rome and London—Italy, Signor Mussolini intimated, would be in a position to show herself more strongly in favour of Austria.

In addition to this it was learned later on that Signor Ghigli had also advised the Austrian Government to slow down the *rapprochement* with the Social Democrats, since during the last days the German as well as parts of the Italian press had been busy telling their public that strong sympathies were held in Vienna with the idea of a People's Front and that the Government were willing to conclude agreements with the Communists. To this it must be said that the Communists had never at any time played any part in Austrian politics, that particularly during the period from 1934 to 1938 the Communist movement in Austria had been completely eliminated, and that there was not so much as the very faintest sign of even the rudiments of the party remaining in existence. Finally the Italian Ambassador was understood to have intimated that a plebiscite in Austria would be viewed unfavourably by the Italian Government.

The Patriotic Front, for their part, endeavoured to strengthen Dr. Schuschnigg's position by deciding, on February 28, to organize a *Versammlungssturm* (a hurricane of meetings) all over Austria. Three thousand patriotic meetings were to be held during the next fortnight. These meetings were cancelled on the very next day, March 1, since the project of holding them had been sternly opposed by Dr. Seyss-Inquart, and because the National-Socialists had threatened that disturbances and incidents would occur anywhere they were held. Which only goes to show once more that there were actually two Governments in Austria at that time.

While the meetings of the Patriotic Front were prevented from taking place, the National-Socialists observed not the least restraint in holding theirs, in spite of the official ban. The cue for these meetings was given by a so-called "tour of inspection" which Dr. Seyss-Inquart made to Graz and Linz. Having announced his visit to Graz for March 1, the Minister of the Interior had at the same time given orders that his arrival should be kept secret from the population, in order to avoid demonstrations. But the National-Socialist Seyss-Inquart had simultaneously informed his colleague on the National Political

Committee at Graz, Professor Dadieu, of the time he was to arrive at the latter's house. Thus hardly had Dr. Seyss-Inquart arrived at Professor Dadieu's when twenty thousand National-Socialists from all Styria, with uniforms, swastikas and all, marched up in front of his house. Instead of calling the police and the gendarmery and, in accordance with the ban on all meetings, sending the gathering home, as would have been his duty as Minister of the Interior, National-Socialist Seyss-Inquart appeared on the balcony and—addressed the crowd of his supporters. And as if this had not been sufficient, he was followed by Professor Dadieu, who—in the presence of the Minister of the Interior and of Public Security—declared: "The course to be followed in the near future is clearly and adequately laid down. It is agreed that the wearing of the swastika and the greeting 'Heil Hitler' are free to every one in private life."

Official quarters in Vienna were informed of this early on March 2. The Government's Press Department, however, forbade the publication of the incident, giving for reason that Dr. Schuschnigg alone was to decide upon such matters. The effect, however, was that on the morning of March 3 the first swastikas were seen to be worn also in Vienna. Towards the noon-hour of March 4 groups of National-Socialist students of the Vienna Polytechnic appeared in the Kaerntnerstrasse and on the Ring offering for sale small and large metal swastikas to be worn as button-holes. The wearing of these badges had been expressly forbidden by Dr. Schuschnigg, but the police had been instructed by Dr. Seyss-Inquart not to interfere with their wearers provided that the badges did not bear the inscription N.S.D.A.P. And this, of course, they did not.

On the same day Dr. Schuschnigg was compelled to grant one further concession to Berlin. General Jansa, the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, had to be dismissed. He was particularly disliked by Herr Hitler as the author of plans for Austria's resistance to Germany. He had furthermore come to be regarded as the creator of the so-called "flood barriers" in the Inn valley, which actually were secret Austrian lines of defence in the district of Kufstein, opposite the German border town of Kiefersfelden—and incidentally one of the points where the German troops actually crossed the border into Austria on March 11,

1938. Furthermore, some of the most prominent National-Socialist representatives, such as Major Klausner (the leader of the Austria S.A.) and Professor Menghin, had to be appointed to the National Political Committee and the State Council, while on the other hand, Dr. Stepan (Provincial Governor of Styria, and for some time regional leader of the Patriotic Front) had to be dismissed at the request of Berlin for having taken too strong measures against National-Socialists.

The influence exercised on Austrian policy by Berlin became daily more unmistakable. But Dr. Schuschnigg held fast to the advice of Signor Ghigli, the Italian Ambassador, and remained cool-headed and calm. Just as strictly, on the other hand, he bore in mind the threat uttered by Herr Hitler at Berchtesgaden that the shedding of the blood of Austrian National-Socialists would inevitably cause German intervention. That was the reason why neither the police nor the troops were permitted to make use of their weapons, and why, during the clashes of the following day, numerous supporters of the Patriotic Front were injured, but not a single National-Socialist.

To the degree to which they realized that official interference with their activities was slackening, the Austrian National-Socialists grew more audacious. On March 5 Dr. Seyss-Inquart went on his "inspection tour" to Linz, allowing himself this time to be received openly by a guard of honour of the local National-Socialists, commanded by Herr Breitenhaller, leader of the Upper Austrian National-Socialists and member of the National Political Committee. The streets of Linz were throughout lavishly decorated with the old Reich German colours, black-white-red, black-red-gold, and brand-new swastika flags. About fifty thousand National-Socialists had been concentrated at Linz from all parts of Upper Austria, Lower Austria, and Salzburg, to give Dr. Seyss-Inquart an enthusiastic reception in the streets of Linz. Addressing these fifty thousand National-Socialists, with their forbidden flags and forbidden uniforms, from the balcony of the Provincial Government-house, the same Minister of the Interior who, in his broadcast on February 22, had forbidden the use of the swastika and the Hitler salute, declared:

"What are we and where do we stand? We are Germans, and

we are Austrians too, and stand on Austrian soil. What is Austria? The eastern march of the German nation in the Alpine and Danubian area. Austria is German and only German. The community of destiny and life of the whole German nation is to-day already an established fact. In the minds of men the National-German Reich is already a fact, and not only a fact of cultural or spiritual significance, but a fact of political significance. And this National-German Reich of a common destiny, of common cultural achievement, it is our aim to uphold.

"The independence of Austria could only be endangered if forces should arise which sought to divert Austria from the German course and to set her against the Reich."

It was these passages in the Minister's speech which caused *The Times* in its issue of March 7 to make the following remark: "This speech seemed to close the Austrian chapter in European history for a long time to come, in so far as it dealt with the status of Austria and her relationship with several Great Powers interested in it. Austria, Dr. Seyss-Inquart intimated, had found her place at the side of the Reich and meant to stay there. Her destiny was inseparably linked with that of the Reich."

At the conclusion of his speech Dr. Seyss-Inquart announced that at last his views concerning the wearing of the swastika and the Hitler salute had been accepted. And he gave the following orders:

"The question of greeting, badges, flags and songs is henceforth regulated as follows: No objections may be raised in Austria to the 'Heil Hitler' greeting as the usual social greeting; its use, however, in all official places, in schools and in universities, as well as in the various sections of the Patriotic Front remains forbidden. The silent German greeting consisting of the lifting of the right hand is permitted in the same circumstances as the spoken greeting 'Heil Hitler'. The singing of the *Deutschlandlied* is permitted on occasions bearing a national character on the condition that it be preceded by the first verse of the Austrian National Anthem.

"For the hoisting of the swastika flag the general existing regulations apply, with the exception that on special occasions, as on the visit of distinguished visitors from the Reich, as well as at the celebration of public commemoration days, Austrian

citizens may, if ordered by the authorities, also hoist the swastika flag, provided it be shown side by side with the Austrian national flag. The use of the swastika on badges will be subject to regulations by the authorities. National organizations and associations will, however, be permitted, if they so desire, to adopt the swastika on their club badges in a form to be approved of by the authorities.

"Such permissions for the use of badges showing the swastika emblem will be issued at a very early date, after which the police will be ordered to prevent the wearing of any other badges which have not been approved by them. Until then the swastika must not be worn on occasions when dealing with the authorities, in the public services, in schools, universities, or on the official premises of the Patriotic Front."

This last sentence, put in the negative way, practically amounted to permission to wear the swastika everywhere else.

The next morning the swastika was worn demonstratively by all National-Socialists in Austria.

Immediate and energetic counter-measures had to be taken by Dr. Schuschnigg, if he was not prepared to give up already at this stage. Since March 3 intensive negotiations between the Chancellor and representatives of the Austrian working class had been going on without break. A "Committee of Eight" had been formed exclusively of former Social Democratic party leaders who enjoyed the full confidence of the Left sections of the working class, and a number of demands formulated by the Committee had been laid before the Chancellor. They were:

- (1). The Social Working Community to be put on an equal footing with the National Political Committee.
- (2). Former Social Democratic party leaders, especially Herr Schorsch, former trade union secretary who had escaped to Brno in Czechoslovakia, to be accepted by the Government as spokesman of the workers.
- (3). Return of the confiscated party funds of the former Social Democratic organizations, associations, and cultural institutions.
- (4). Permission to publish a limited number of newspapers and periodicals for the Social Democratic working class.

- (5). Lifting of the ban on the wearing of Social Democratic badges, the showing of Social Democratic flags and standards, and the singing of Social Democratic songs.
- (6). Admission of representatives of the workers to public corporations, associations, and organizations in the same manner as enjoyed by the National-Socialists.

These privileges Dr. Schuschnigg was on principle prepared to grant the workers, provided they pledged themselves to lend him their full support in his endeavours to save Austrian independence. Several valuable days were spent in discussions whether the granting of these privileges should precede the workers' pledge or vice versa. Negotiations were also hampered somewhat by the fact that the Committee of Eight had not the full support of the workers themselves. The National-Socialists had not remained unaware of the negotiations and had themselves made counter-advances towards Social Democrats, to woo them from Schuschnigg. The overwhelming majority of the Austrian workers, however, was by far more strongly opposed to Herr Hitler than to Dr. Schuschnigg, and thus after five days' negotiations an agreement was reached. In the name of the entire organizations represented by them, the spokesmen of the workers declared their readiness to support Dr. Schuschnigg in the event of a plebiscite being held, on the condition that immediately after such a plebiscite new and definite negotiations were to begin.

Thus it was that the plebiscite came to be projected. The reasons for it were simple enough.

The advance of the National-Socialist movement and its ceaseless propaganda had in the meantime assumed such proportions as to convince Dr. Schuschnigg that only a quick and decisive stroke could save Austria. In spite of the warning uttered by the Italian Ambassador, the Chancellor decided to carry through a plebiscite in the shortest possible time. Wisely enough he mentioned this plan neither to Dr. Seyss-Inquart nor to the Cabinet Council, knowing that it would only be opposed and prevented. The plebiscite would have to take place with the shortest possible delay. Not a single day could be wasted in face of the latitude which had become licence. Since a plebiscite

could practically only be held on a Sunday, and it was planned on Tuesday, March 8, Dr. Schuschnigg decided to hold it on Sunday, March 13.

Dr. Schuschnigg made his plan known only to a few of his closest intimates. If its secret remained kept, the National-Socialists would be left with only very little time to adapt their propaganda accordingly. And it was just at that moment that the Austrian National-Socialists seemed about to throw their whole forces into a final storm.

After a few days of general rest and quiet National-Socialist demonstrations were resumed in Vienna on the evening of March 5, which was the day of Dr. Seyss-Inquart's declarations at Linz. Mass demonstrations were staged all over Vienna and continued during the following days, concentrating mainly on the Inner City, outside the German tourist agency, on the main thoroughfares leading from the centre to the outer districts of Vienna, the Mariahilferstrasse, Waehringerstrasse, Alserstrasse, Praterstrasse, and Landstrasse. Groups, mostly of youths wearing swastika badges, appeared everywhere, mixed with the crowds, glaring at and threatening anyone not wearing a swastika. During the first days these groups disappeared on the approach of the larger groups of Patriotic Front supporters, but gradually they abandoned their caution, and in the end clashes often took place between the two groups. The purpose of the Nazis obviously was to show the population that they no longer needed to hide either themselves or their emblems. Curiously enough, not one anti-Semitic word or slogan was heard during those days, in spite of the increasing intensity of the demonstrations. It appears that orders had been given expressly by Dr. Seyss-Inquart to his followers to refrain from shouting anti-Semitic slogans and from molesting the Jews. Provocations such as occurred were generally and principally directed against the supporters of the Schuschnigg Government.

On March 8, the day Dr. Schuschnigg decided to hold his plebiscite, the first Social Democratic workers' meeting for over four years was held in a workers' home at Floridsdorf, one of the working-class suburbs of Vienna. The hall was decorated again with red flags, "old soldiers" of Social Democracy wore red carnation button-holes and their party badge (the three

arrows), and at the beginning of the meeting the "Song of Work" was sung again. For the first time for over four years there were no police in the hall, and the speakers were allowed freely and unrestrictedly to voice their opinions. Notwithstanding considerable differences of opinion among the delegates, a resolution was finally adopted. Full support was to be lent to Dr. Schuschnigg provided he accepted the following newly drafted demands of the workers:

- (1). The workers to be given equal treatment with the National-Socialists and all other groups within the Government's Patriotic Front.
- (2). The Government-appointed officials of the single Trade Union Federation created by the Government after the destruction of the Social Democratic trade unions to be supplemented by genuinely elected workers' representatives.
- (3). The workers to have the means of propagating their views through their own newspapers and through wireless talks like the National-Socialists.
- (4). Legislation to be introduced concerning wages, workers' protection and insurance, paid holidays, and other social matters.

On the evening of March 8, Dr. Schuschnigg accepted these demands in principle.

Early the next morning, March 9, he left for Innsbruck.

The Reich-German press, having followed the negotiations between Dr. Schuschnigg and the workers with extreme misgiving, immediately burst into a storm of protest and accusation, claiming that Dr. Schuschnigg intended to form a "People's Front" in Austria, that the Communists were terrorizing the streets of Vienna (while actually this terror was exerted exclusively by the National-Socialists), that the blood of thousands of National-Socialists was flowing, and so forth.

Meanwhile, on the previous evening a *putsch* had been attempted by the National-Socialists at Graz, where negotiations had been going on at the Provincial Government-building between the Government and the National-Socialist leaders

concerning the participation of the National-Socialists in the Provincial Government of Styria. The Federal Government representatives had offered the National-Socialists one seat in the Provincial Government, whereupon Professor Dadieu immediately sprang up and demanded three. No sooner had the Federal Government refused this demand than suddenly thousands of National-Socialists, as if under orders, streamed towards the Government-building and surrounded it, declaring that they would not move until their demands had been satisfied. The Government ordered police and troops to the spot, and they succeeded in clearing the square. Negotiations were broken off. One battalion of chasseurs, several armoured cars, and a squadron of military aeroplanes were despatched to Graz during the same night, and peace and order were maintained.

Arriving at Innsbruck on March 9, Dr. Schuschnigg was given a triumphal welcome by the Tyrolese. More than 20,000 of his supporters had gathered in front of the Provincial Government-house, including several companies of the *Tiroler Landes-schuetzen* in their traditional picturesque costumes and uniforms (dating from Napoleonic times). Feeling ran very high in sympathy with the Chancellor, who himself was a child of the Tyrol. But in Vienna too, and in other towns, thousands of his supporters as well as many National-Socialists gathered in the streets when it became known that important announcements would be made by the Chancellor over the wireless.

Dr. Schuschnigg's speech was undoubtedly extremely effective, probably for the simple reason that it was utterly sincere and open-hearted.¹

"Threats and attempts at intimidation which are being made here and there under the cloak of patriotic sentiment will not be tolerated", he declared, with a voice almost trembling with emotion. "Such threats and gestures endanger the peace, for I cannot demand from my own friends that they shall keep quiet unless the other side keeps quietly and exactly to the letter and to the spirit of the agreement which has been made and is publicly known."

¹ *Farewell Austria*, p. 317.

Declaring that work was Austria's most imperative need at that hour, but that it was conditional upon the restoration of peace and quiet, Dr. Schuschnigg said the repeated demand had been made to him from all sides that a plebiscite should be held to find out the real feelings of the Austrian nation. Again and again he had been pressed for such a plebiscite, and invariably he had answered that it would be held when in his opinion the time for it had come. Now that moment had come. He was calling on the entire people to state on Sunday, March 13, openly and without pressure or influence whether they felt they would answer "Yes" to the following question:

"Are you for a free and German, independent and social, Christian and united Austria, for peace and work, for the equality of all those who affirm themselves for the people and the Fatherland?"

The election, Dr. Schuschnigg announced, would be a secret one, and polling age would be fixed at 24 as was originally stipulated in the Austrian Constitution. Thereby the greater part of the younger National-Socialists were automatically excluded from taking part in it.

How grave the situation was, however, was only made clear by the Chancellor's last words:

"Fellow countrymen, believe me, I know what it means to bear responsibility. I have taken sole responsibility for this decision, and I stand or fall, with all that I hold dear and believe, by this affirmation of faith which the Austrian people is about to make. But I have taken on this responsibility because I cannot conceive that a single man or woman who knows what is at stake can to-day be against our watchword.

"Do not let anything lead you astray. Remember the word of exhortation that even in peaceful times we have often quoted in our land when we have spoken of the events of the year 1809:

"Manneder, es isch Zeit!" [Men, it is time!]

These last words had a tremendously stirring effect on his listeners. They were the historic words with which Andreas Hofer, the famous liberator of the Tyrol had called his peasants to arms against Napoleon and the Bavarians in 1809. It had been a battle-cry then, a cry for liberation, and the deep emotion

in the Chancellor's voice made it clear that he meant it to be again. But he meant something else as well, and Dr. Schuschnigg's voice left no doubt about that either in the hearts of his listeners: it was a last and desperate cry for help from his countrymen. And all those who then heard him knew that this was the moment to make a stand, and to save Austria from the swelling tide of National Socialism.

An attempt has since been made to reproach Dr. Schuschnigg with having made this fateful decision against the wish of Italy, and entirely on his own responsibility without the agreement of his ministers. But no one who witnessed the speed with which things were then developing in Austria could suppose that there was any other course left open to him. Had he not made this last attempt, had he given up without making a final stand, apart from not helping matters he might even have made them considerably worse. Probably no other course could have prevented the National-Socialist steam-roller from breaking across the frontier into Austria, only it might have delayed it a few days. Those few days, however, would have been days of civil war, since neither the workers nor the rest of the patriotic population seemed willing nor able to stand the continuous provocation of the National-Socialists any longer.

Besides, the holding of a plebiscite was entirely lawful. The Austrian Constitution provided for it in certain important eventualities or emergencies, and it was nowhere laid down that a certain time had to elapse between its announcement and the actual date of its being held. According to the law it was possible and permissible to allow not more than four days for the preparations of the plebiscite, however hurried and incomplete these preparations would have to be. But on the other hand the country's nerves were on edge, and another four days of tension was the most it could still stand. It was an operation involving life and death, but there were chances that it might succeed provided the situation underwent no change through circumstances outside.

Calculations which were made in those days in authoritative quarters, based on the Austrian population entitled to vote—that is, those above 24 years of age—gave the following result:

the number of electors was reliably estimated at 4,400,000, of whom more than 1,400,000 workers had already clearly and publicly professed their sympathies with Dr. Schuschnigg; the votes of the great majority of the peasant population could also be regarded as safe for the Chancellor, and a minimum of 1½ million "Yes" votes could confidently be expected from them; to which had to be added about 300,000 Jews and half-Jews who could be relied upon to cast their votes against National Socialism. This would have provided Dr. Schuschnigg with something in the neighbourhood of 3,200,000 votes, which would have been equivalent to between 65 and 70 per cent. of all votes cast. Even if all sections of the people with "National" or openly National-Socialist sympathies had voted "no", which was only probable owing to the way the question had been put, Dr. Schuschnigg's victory seemed to be assured.

This was clear to everybody. What was much less clear was whether the plebiscite would be allowed to take place at all.

Dr. Goebbels, German Minister for Propaganda, described a few weeks later how the announcement of the plebiscite was received by Herr Hitler. Having listened to Dr. Schuschnigg's speech on the wireless, the Fuehrer paced up and down his room like an infuriated lion, declaring immediately that this plebiscite must never take place, and that military measures were to be taken immediately. Herr Hitler had no doubt that his plans in Austria, already so far advanced, would suffer a severe setback once the overwhelming majority of the Austrians, as he had good reason to suspect, had openly professed their sympathies with Dr. Schuschnigg.

Strictest orders were issued from Berlin at once to the effect that the German public must on no account learn anything of Dr. Schuschnigg's new move. But National-Socialists in Austria, too, were at first completely perplexed and disappointed, since they too knew that they were in no position to secure the majority of votes. A new wave of terrorism might have helped them, given enough time. But time there was none. Among the patriotic population the announcement of the plebiscite was greeted as if the hour of deliverance had at last come. They hoped or believed that once the fatal Sunday was over peace and quiet might return at least for some time, and that at least for

the moment the independence of the country was not jeopardized. Abroad feelings were divided. As on February 12, Rome made no comment, while in Great Britain and France the announcement met with warm sympathies as foreshadowing the most democratic and most dignified of all possible solutions. The only disturbing factor was that at that moment there was no Government in France, which fact hampered French diplomatic activity severely.

For Dr. Schuschnigg the whole problem was to get safely through those four days without Germany preventing him from carrying out his plan. His imperative duty in those four days was to maintain peace and order in the interior and to prevent any possible bloodshed, because this time it might mean also the flowing of National-Socialist blood. This goes to explain the otherwise inexplicable mildness and leniency observed by the police and gendarmery in face of even the most riotous National-Socialist demonstrations, but it also explains why it was the Government itself which prevented the workers' battalions from organizing counter-demonstrations against the National-Socialists.

Herr Hitler's supporters in Austria quickly recovered from their earlier perplexity and asked for help and advice from Berlin. Instructions arrived two hours later: the plebiscite was to be sabotaged with all means and weapons at their disposal, unrest and clashes were to be provoked as widely as possible to provide the Reich Government with cause and reason for open interference.

As it always had done in the past the National-Socialist organization functioned flawlessly. After almost two hours of complete silence that night, suddenly towards 11 P.M. thousands and thousands of National-Socialists hurried into the Inner City as if from underground tunnels and passages, creeping through every possible hole, growing and multiplying like mushrooms. But this time they no longer confined themselves to shouting and noisy demonstration; open attacks on Dr. Schuschnigg's supporters and even on harmless and quiet passers-by occurred simultaneously at different places, for the first time blood actually flowed, motor-cars were stopped in the street and

turned over, their inmates beaten up, tram-cars were held up and raided, innocent people were attacked with knives in several parts of the Leopoldstadt (Vienna's Jewish district), while in the Josefstadt, another district of Vienna, shots were fired by National-Socialists at a group of members of the Christian trade unions and four were gravely wounded, the trade unionists not even returning the fire. In Linz National-Socialists late at night raided a meeting place of the "Jungvolk", the youth organization of the Patriotic Front, and six young boys were injured. Of the 27 gravely wounded who were admitted to Vienna hospitals during that night alone, not one was a National-Socialist. It was only after 2 A.M., when outrages had been committed in all parts of the city, that the police managed temporarily to restore order.

But only temporarily. From that hour onwards it became practically impossible for the population to breathe freely. Demonstrations were resumed at nine o'clock the next morning, and went on all through the day in Vienna, Graz, Linz and Innsbruck. As has already been described in the opening chapter, the National-Socialists had transported their supporters from the country by thousands on lorries and by rail into the larger cities. There they had been quartered in cellars and other hiding-places from which they crept out, mostly shabbily clothed and fiercely hungry, to throw themselves with the utmost bitterness into the struggle. For all these people everything was at stake. They knew neither sleep nor respite, but were driven on by fury of hunger and by the immediate prospect of payment by their masters across the frontier, for whom they had to yell and howl and provoke and riot by day and by night.

On the evening of March 10 the workers of the outer districts of Vienna, numbering several thousands, formed themselves into a procession to march into the city and restore order. As the police were not allowed to interfere, they were determined to establish order themselves. Originally they had planned merely to march in a huge procession silently and with raised clenched fists, hoping thus to intimidate the rioters. But the danger of clashes ensuing was too great. The Government decided to stop the workers' battalions before they had reached the main thoroughfare of the city. Representatives of the Government,

officials of the Patriotic Front, and even the leaders of the workers themselves had a hard time persuading the workers that it was better to return home. Finally the workers gave in and returned.

Only one small group of workers reached the Inner City of Vienna that night. But while the police nowhere obstructed the doings of National-Socialists, they immediately and at the express order of Dr. Seyss-Inquart resorted to the strongest measures against the workers, dispersing them with rubber truncheons and drawn sabres. Small wonder that from now on the police were openly greeted by the Nazis with the Hitler salute and received loud acclamations from them wherever they appeared in larger bodies.

In Graz all important thoroughfares and public squares were occupied by troops. For three days the town resembled one huge military camp, and consequently relative quiet and order reigned in the Styrian capital.

Towards noon on Thursday, March 10, it was learned that Dr. Keppler, one of Herr Hitler's emissaries, had arrived in Vienna by aeroplane and delivered in the name of the Reich Government an ultimatum demanding the immediate cancellation of the plebiscite. After prolonged discussions with the members of his Cabinet Dr. Schuschnigg declined to accept the ultimatum. Up to that moment, Dr. Seyss-Inquart, although hesitatingly, had more or less followed Dr. Schuschnigg's general policy. On Friday, March 11, the tables were suddenly turned. The *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, a paper of avowedly National-Socialist tendencies, that morning published an article by State Councillor Dr. Jury demanding in the name of the National-Socialists the cancellation of the plebiscite. Since Dr. Jury was one of the closest collaborators of Dr. Seyss-Inquart, Dr. Schuschnigg made representations to his Minister of the Interior. The *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten* was thereupon confiscated, but two hours later a special edition of the *Volksruf* (People's Call), a new National-Socialist paper founded only a few days before, appeared with a complete reproduction of Dr. Jury's suppressed article. A Cabinet crisis now seemed inevitable. But meanwhile, after Herr Hitler's first ultimatum had been rejected, another of

Herr Hitler's emissaries in the person of Minister Hess had arrived in Vienna by air on the Friday morning, delivering a second, still more strongly worded ultimatum. This was also rejected by Dr. Schuschnigg, who was firmly resolved not to yield to pressure or force.

Demonstrations in the inner city had meanwhile reached their peak. The entire traffic in the streets was at a standstill, and serious clashes were feared any moment.

In response to the second German ultimatum a partial mobilization of the Austrian Federal army had been ordered by Dr. Schuschnigg on the morning of March 11. The Chancellor already feared invasion. The 1915 Class was called up, and at intervals of thirty minutes those belonging to it were ordered over the wireless to report at once and receive their uniforms.

Towards noon it was learned that all through the morning large military transports had been leaving the western railway-station uninterruptedly in express trains for the western frontier districts. But as the train journey from Vienna to Kufstein took nearly ten hours, it seemed hardly possible to concentrate substantial numbers of troops at the frontier before nightfall. And this, too, Herr Hitler knew only too well.

A third ultimatum was delivered at 2.30 P.M. by Herr Buerckel. A time-limit of four hours was attached. In the event of the plebiscite not being called off by 6.30 P.M., German troops at that hour would cross the frontier into Austria.

Demonstrations in Vienna went on uninterruptedly through all these hours, and took increasingly threatening forms. In Linz, Salzburg and Innsbruck the National-Socialists were already marching in uniform. In Klagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia, at 5 P.M. the National-Socialists occupied a number of public buildings, while in the Burgenland province, mainly at Eisenstadt, their occupation had only been prevented by armed forces. In the southern Burgenland, however, plundering and looting by National-Socialists had begun.

At 1 P.M. the Austrian Front Militia was mobilized to be despatched to the Burgenland and restore order. Their lorries left Vienna at 2.30 P.M. but they were too late, and had no chance to intervene.

At 6 P.M., while Dr. Schuschnigg was still in conference with

Herr Miklas, the Federal President, discussing with him and his closest collaborators whether the third ultimatum should also be rejected and military resistance offered, a high Government official burst into the conference-room, a telegram in his hand. It stated laconically that the first detachments of the German Army had already crossed the frontier and stood on Austrian territory.

This telegram was false. But it had its effect.

Once more Dr. Schuschnigg made a desperate effort to stop the disaster from taking place. He telephoned to Rome, Paris, and London, to inform the heads of the three Governments, to ask for their advice and if possible to receive assurances from them.

In Rome there was no answer.

In Paris there was no Government which could have answered.

In London, Herr von Ribbentrop during that fatal hour was in conference with Mr. Chamberlain, and Baron Franckenstein, the Austrian Minister, was unable at that decisive moment to see any responsible member of the British Cabinet.

The Austrian battalions were on their way from Vienna to the Tyrol.

But the German army was said to have crossed the frontier already.

At 6 P.M. on March 11 the plebiscite was cancelled. At 7.30 P.M. Dr. Schuschnigg resigned. At 8 P.M. he was the prisoner of the new National-Socialist Government.

The German Army Marches

THE GERMAN ARMY crossed the Austrian frontier on March 11, 1938, at about 10 P.M. at three different points—Kiefersfelden, Salzburg, and Passau.

Two hours earlier, at 8 P.M., the official German news agency issued a statement that Dr. Seyss-Inquart, who was described as "the head of the Provisional Government, had sent an urgent telegram to Herr Hitler, asking him to send troops as soon as possible to assist in the preservation of order and to avoid bloodshed." At nine o'clock I had a personal interview with Dr. Seyss-Inquart's secretary. To my question whether this news was true he replied categorically that Dr. Seyss-Inquart had not asked for German troops to march into Austria, since his Chief was convinced that with the help of the Austrian troops and police at his disposal he would well be able to prevent all incidents and possible outrages.

Actually not the least little incident occurred anywhere in the whole of Austria on that evening. In his farewell speech which he had made at 7.30 P.M., Dr. Schuschnigg had declared expressly that he had ordered the Austrian troops to offer no resistance to the German detachments on their march into Austria. In Vienna itself nobody thought of resistance, the working class being far too insufficiently organized and without arms.

Immediately after Dr. Schuschnigg had been arrested at the microphone at 7.30 and taken under police escort to his rooms at the Belvedere, the Chancellery at the Ballhausplatz was occupied by Austrian National-Socialists. The stately old building was "conquered" by youths of between seventeen and twenty-two years of age, armed with rifles and ammunition but without uniforms. They just walked up into the Chancellery and "took over the Government". It has been described in the opening chapters how the yelling hordes of National-Socialists suddenly

between 6 and 6.30 P.M. cleared the streets and disappeared. Upon word from dispatch-riders on motor-cycles they had hurried on to their pre-arranged meeting-places where they received arms and ammunition and S.A. and S.S. uniforms in so far as they were obtainable. They were also given torches, and were ordered to march at eight o'clock in long processions through the streets of the Inner City. This order was strictly executed. Towards 8.30 the streets were thronged with jubilant National-Socialists, traffic was at a standstill, and the whole neighbourhood of the Chancellery was completely blocked.

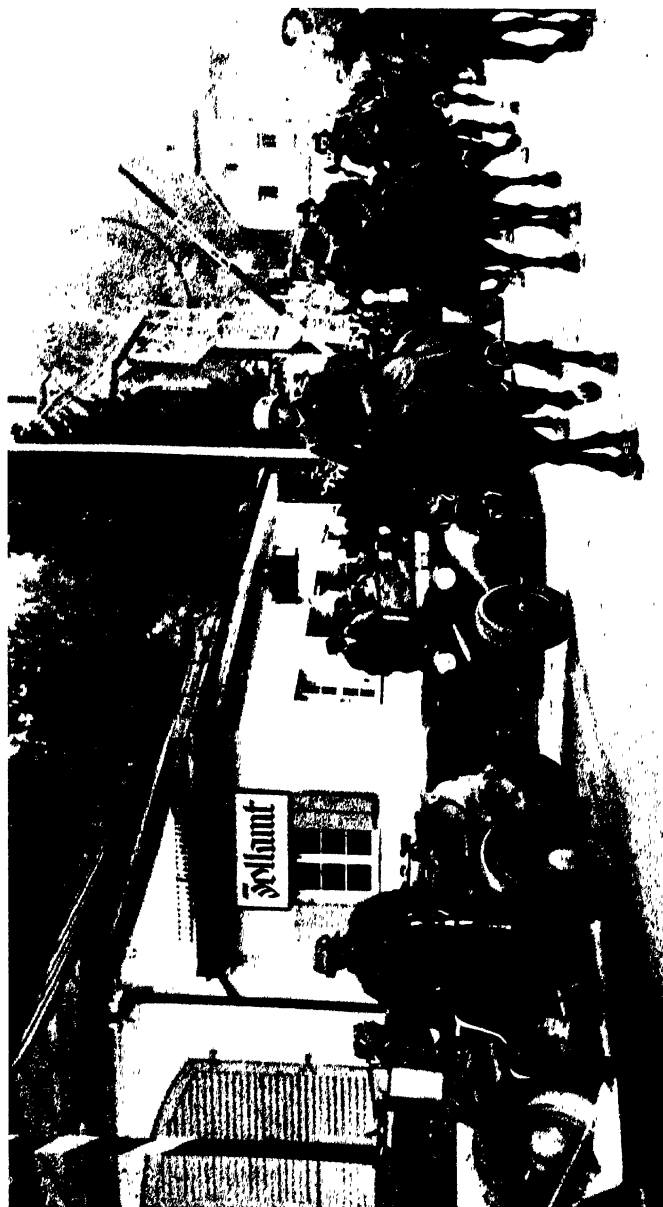
What had actually happened?

Dr. Schuschnigg had resigned. But Herr Miklas, the Federal President, had refused to accept his resignation and had declined to appoint a new Government. Consequently Dr. Seyss-Inquart, Minister of the Interior in the resigned Cabinet, at 8.15 P.M. appeared at the microphone and made the following announcement:

"Men and women of Austria, German comrades: In view of the events of to-day, and with particular regard to those which face us, I declare that in my capacity as Minister of the Interior and of Security I am still in office, and that I consider myself responsible for the maintenance of peace and order in this whole country. I appeal to everybody to keep calm. The next hours and perhaps days will have to be borne with particularly strict discipline.

"Should there be any manifestations to-day these must not take the form of excessive demonstrations. Therefore I demand of all National-Socialist organizations concerned with the maintenance of order to make it their duty to see order maintained, and to appeal to their comrades in this sense. I count upon them and trust that they will support unconditionally the police, gendarmery and troops in their task, and hold themselves at their disposal.

"I remind them particularly that any resistance to the German army, should it eventually march into Austria, is completely out of the question, also on the part of police, gendarmery, and troops, whose only and most important duty it is to maintain peace and order in this country. I want you all to



Ufide World Photos

The 61st German Infantry Regiment crossing the Austrian frontier at Kiefersfelden on March 13, 1938.
The Austrian Custom House is on the left, with the road barriers raised.

keep your patience and to wait, to close your ranks, and to pull together so that we all march forward together to a happier future."

This appeal by Dr. Seyss-Inquart was repeated at least ten times during the same evening. Until 10 P.M. the entire broadcasting programme consisted of its repetition at regular intervals.

It is clearly evident from this appeal that not even Dr. Seyss-Inquart thought, at the moment of Dr. Schuschnigg's overthrow, of surrendering Austria's independence. It is clearly evident from his speech that Dr. Seyss-Inquart had not demanded of Herr Hitler the despatch of German troops, but that he was convinced that Austrian troops, police, and gendarmery, supported by the armed formations of the Austrian National-Socialists, would be sufficient to maintain peace and order in the whole of Austria.

But this dream of a National-Socialist Austria under his own leadership did not last long. At 9 P.M. Herr Rudolf Hess, German Cabinet Minister and Deputy to the Fuehrer, arrived at the Chancellery as Herr Hitler's personal emissary. He urged Dr. Seyss-Inquart to proceed as speedily as possible with the formation of a new lawful Government in Austria whose only task it was to be to announce the "Anschluss"—the union of Austria and the Reich—in fact to declare the end of Austrian independence. It took Herr Hess considerable time to convince Dr. Seyss-Inquart that he too had been duped, and that he had to surrender his power to Herr Hitler. It took considerably longer still for Herr Hess to realize that Herr Miklas, the Federal President, was not to be persuaded to appoint a new Government.

None of these developments found their way into the newspapers. The Press were not even permitted to reproduce, in their editions of the next morning, the farewell speech of Dr. Schuschnigg. All those papers who attempted it in spite of this injunction were immediately seized and had to reappear in altered form.

At the Chancellery heated negotiation and bargaining went on until after 1.30 A.M. Whether President Miklas finally yielded to pressure and agreed to appoint a new Cabinet under

Dr. Seyss-Inquart, or whether under the pressure exerted by Herr Hess it was simply announced that Herr Miklas' agreement had been obtained, in order to provide Herr Hitler with at least the shadow of justification for the occupation of Austria—these questions will probably never be settled. President Miklas at any rate was forced to resign the next day, and has since been under arrest.

Finally towards 2 A.M. the following announcement was broadcast:

"The Federal President has appointed Dr. Artur Seyss-Inquart Federal Chancellor. The Federal President has furthermore at the suggestion of the Federal Chancellor made the following appointments:

Vice-Chancellor, DR. GLAISE-HORSTENAU.

Foreign Affairs, DR. WOLF.

Justice, DR. HUEBER.

Education, PROFESSOR MENGHIN.

Finance, DR. NEUMAYER.

Social Administration, DR. JURY.

Agriculture, DR. REINTALLER.

Commerce and Transport, DR. FISCHBOECK.

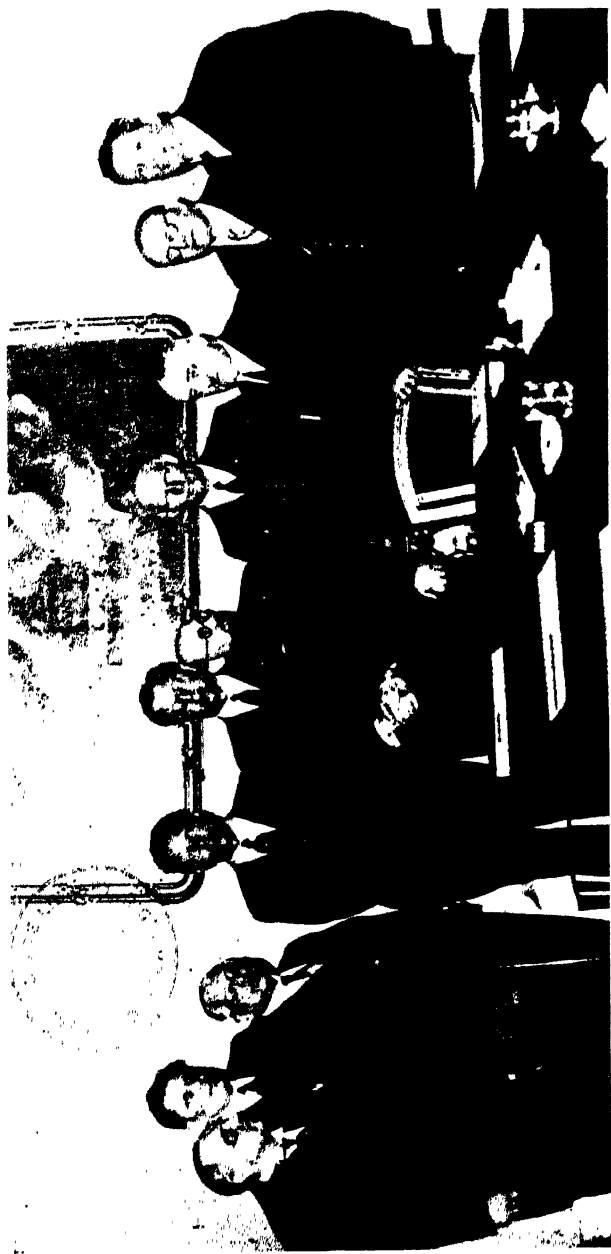
Secretary of State for Security, DR. SKUBL.

Secretary of State for Political Instruction, MAJOR KLAUSNER.

Secretary of State of the Interior, DR. KALTENBRUNNER.

Of these Dr. Hueber, the new Minister of Justice, was a brother-in-law of Field-Marshal Goering, and Dr. Neumayer had already been Minister of Finance under Dr. Schuschnigg. Dr. Skubl was dismissed on the very next day, together with the provisionally appointed burgomaster of Vienna, Major Lahr. Dr. Wolf had to hand over the Foreign Office two days later to Herr von Ribbentrop.

At 10 P.M. the *Horst Wessel* song was broadcast for the first time from the Austrian wireless stations. It was the only record which the National-Socialists, who had occupied the building of the Broadcasting Corporation, had brought with them. At first it was alternately broadcast with Dr. Seyss-Inquart's pronouncement; later on the National-Socialists discovered two



Ullrich World Photos.

Austria's All-Nazi Cabinet formed by Dr. Seyss-Inquart on March 12, 1938. *Left to right* : Dr. Michael Skubl (Security, since arrested), Dr. Wolff (Foreign Affairs), Dr. Neumayer (Finance), Dr. Hueber (Justice), Dr. Seyss-Inquart (Chancellor and Defence), Prof. Menghin (Education), Dr. Rheintaller (Agriculture), Dr. Glaise-Horstenaus (Vice-Chancellor), Dr. Jury (Public Welfare), Dr. Fischboeck (Trade and Communications).

more suitable records, two famous German military marches, the *Badenweiler* march and the *Hohenfriedberger* march. These four were now alternately broadcast until 3.30 A.M. It was certainly the dullest programme the Viennese ever listened to!

The events which took place in Vienna on March 11 and 12 have to this day not yet been cleared up to their full extent and in all their details. The description I have given of them was based on information brought to me and on my own observation from a point close enough to the main scene of events. But other versions exist, and documents are at hand to-day which throw valuable light on these events from a different angle.

Under the pseudonym of "Viator", an account of these two days has since been published in the *Revue de Paris* by a neutral observer who held a high office in Vienna in closest contact with official quarters, and whose authority and reliability cannot be questioned. These documents are highly informative. The following are some of their relevant passages:

"On March 10, 1938, Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, minister in Dr. Schuschnigg's Cabinet, left Vienna for Stuttgart where he was to lecture on 'The Austrian Army'. According to an interview which he gave to a correspondent of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* he returned to Vienna by air on March 11 and immediately after his arrival went into conference with Dr. Seyss-Inquart. Following their conversation they both proceeded to Chancellor Dr. Schuschnigg to demand of him the cancellation of the plebiscite.

"'The Federal Chancellor,' Dr. Glaise-Horstenau declared in this interview, 'refused to hear any of this. Dr. Seyss-Inquart reminded him of the fact that the Government had completely lost the confidence of the national sections of the population. But the only concession Dr. Schuschnigg was ready to make was to permit the issue of two different kinds of voting papers, one with the text "For Austria with Schuschnigg" and the other with "For Austria without Schuschnigg". Naturally we were not satisfied with this. After negotiations had lasted for an hour and a half we left Dr. Schuschnigg without any decision having been made.' Thereupon Dr. Glaise-Horstenau

and Dr. Seyss-Inquart had together drafted a letter to the Chancellor which was handed to Dr. Schuschnigg at 1 P.M. . . .

"The *Reichpost* in its issue of Saturday, March 12, 1938, is the only Vienna newspaper which published the following information, which appears to have been a semi-official *communiqué* issued by the office of the Federal President: 'In the afternoon Secretary of State Keppler who had arrived in Vienna by air called at the Federal Chancellery at the order of the Reich Government, where he handed in the ultimatum of the Reich Government which demanded the postponement of the plebiscite, the resignation of the Schuschnigg Cabinet, and the appointment of a government under Dr. Seyss-Inquart. This demand was rejected by Herr Miklas, the Federal President. Thereupon at the order of Field-Marshal Goering, the military attaché at the German Legation in Vienna, General Muff, called at the Chancellery and handed the Chancellor and the President a second ultimatum, containing identical demands, which expired at 7.30 P.M. General Muff declared that if the ultimatum were not accepted and its demands complied with, two hundred thousand men of the German army would cross the frontier into Austria. The Federal President refused again under the pressure of this ultimatum to consider a change of government, and replied: "I shall yield only to force. You will be able to overthrow me by force, but I shall not do what you are asking of me. I shall not break my oath of office." The Federal President also refused to accept the resignation of Dr. Schuschnigg which the latter had tendered him.'

"The issue of the *Reichspost* in which this document was published left the press several hours after the formation of the National-Socialist Government under Dr. Seyss-Inquart. It had gone through the censorship, as is proved by its front page, one half of which was blank. Nor was it confiscated either then or later. All of which proves that on Saturday, March 12, this account of the event of the preceding day appeared to the National-Socialist authorities as corresponding absolutely with the truth. This fact must be remembered.

"Dr. Schuschnigg's farewell speech was read over the wireless in the presence of all his Cabinet ministers, including Dr. Seyss-Inquart. It will be remembered that Dr. Schuschnigg declared

in this speech: 'The Federal President has charged me to inform the Austrian people that we are yielding to force.' When he had finished his speech, tears were in Dr. Schuschnigg's eyes, and he broke into violent sobbing. His former colleagues embraced him. When he had put on his overcoat someone advised him to leave the building by a back stairway at the exit of which his car could meanwhile be driven up, since the Ballhausplatz was occupied by large and rather threatening crowds. Dr. Schuschnigg replied that he would leave the Chancellery by the same staircase by which he had entered it. The moment he entered his car accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Herr Bartl, two officers jumped on the running-board of the car and shouted at the chauffeur: 'To Aspern!' which is the aerodrome nearest to Vienna. Dr. Schuschnigg instantly protested loudly: 'No', he said. 'I am a man. I am not going to flee.' And he told the chauffeur: 'Drive home.'

"All dismissed Ministers of the Patriotic Front with the exception of Herr Zernatto, who escaped to Prague, were either put under guard or arrested, like General Zehner, former Minister of War, and Dr. Pernter, former Minister of Education, the friend of Dr. Schuschnigg's who enjoyed his greatest confidence. The Mayor of Vienna, Herr Schmitz, had been arrested and taken to prison already earlier in the evening, where he was surrounded by strictest secrecy. Towards midnight the home of the former Chancellor was surrounded by several bands of armed hooligans.

"The semi-official announcement published in the *Reichpost* on March 12, an issue which, it must be repeated, had passed the censorship of the Austrian National-Socialists, and Dr. Schuschnigg's farewell speech, which was not contradicted in one single point by Dr. Seyss-Inquart's own declaration which immediately followed, make it clear beyond doubt that the postponement of the plebiscite, the resignation of the Schuschnigg Cabinet, and the appointment of the Government of Dr. Seyss-Inquart were brought about by the pressure of a German ultimatum. This and nothing else is the historic truth.

"Dr. Seyss-Inquart knows better than anyone else that he had never asked for the support of the German troops. To have proof of this it is only necessary to read his broadcast declara-

tion of March 11. It contains not a single word which would allow the assumption that he had called in the troops whose arrival he announced.

"In its Berlin edition of March 12 the *Voelkischer Beobachter* published the message of the official German news agency to the effect that Dr. Seyss-Inquart had asked the Government of the Reich to despatch troops as quickly as possible. This telegram is a falsification. It was fabricated in Berlin. Neither Dr. Seyss-Inquart nor anyone in his entourage ever sent a telegram to the Government of the Reich. No post or telegraph office in Vienna or anywhere in Austria ever wired such a text. Indeed the *Voelkischer Beobachter* is careful enough not to quote the time of despatch of this telegram.

"According to official German declarations the German troops are supposed to have crossed the Austrian frontier only on Saturday—at 8 A.M. according to one version, at 5.30 P.M. according to another. Both these times and the date itself are incorrect.

"I declare with certainty that the first motorized detachments of the German army penetrated into Austria on Friday, March 11, between 9.05 and 9.25 P.M.

"Had it been the original intention of the Fuehrer to wait for the result of a plebiscite organized and to be held under military control, and *only then* to proclaim the Anschluss?

"This assumption is permissible.

"For on March 12 the new Foreign Minister, Dr. Wolf, in taking over his office made a speech in which he said the following words 'We shall therefore have to conduct our foreign policy with determination and without any ado as the *second German State*.'

"So badly were the Austrian National-Socialists informed about the immediate future of Austria that it was possible actually for a prominent member of the Government to utter such words as late as on the night of March 11.

"On March 13 at 7.20 P.M. I learned from the most reliable source that President Miklas was still stubbornly refusing to resign, and that two new German divisions would be crossing the border into Austria that same night.

"At eight o'clock the resignation of the Federal President

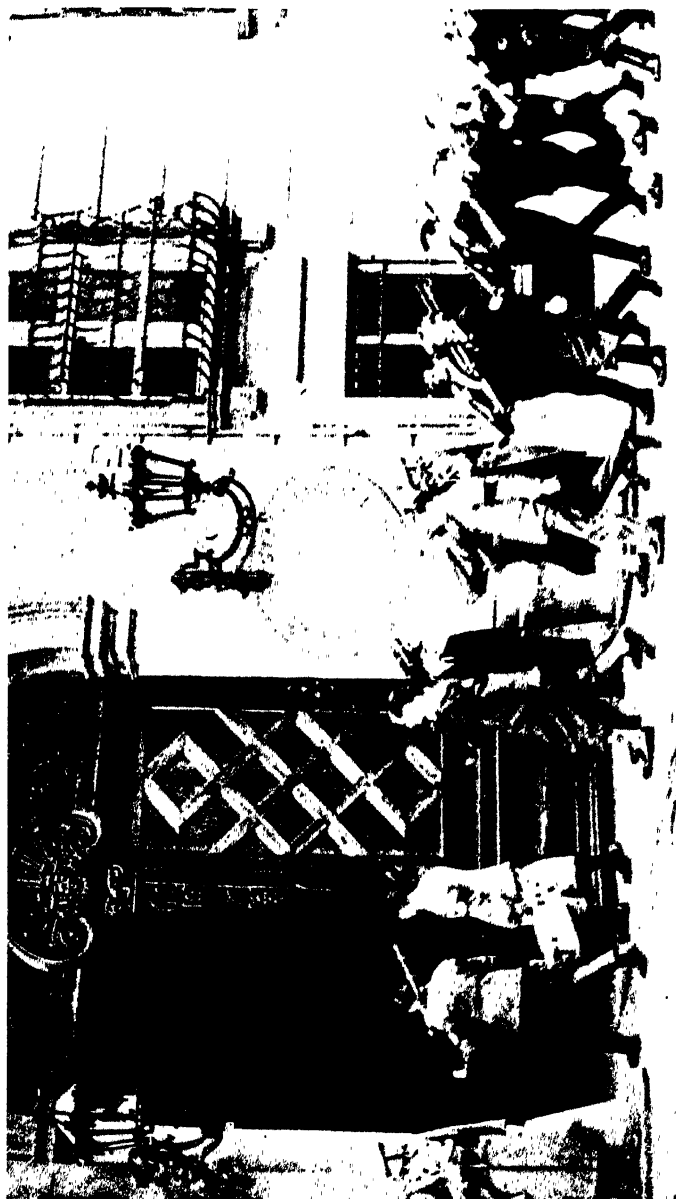


Photo: Planet News, Ltd.
Youthful Storm Troopers, armed with rifles, and wearing swastika armbands on their civilian clothes, occupying the Chancellery in Vienna on March 12, 1938.

was announced over the wireless. Did he resign of his own free will, or was he forced to do so? Was the instrument of his resignation at that moment actually signed? Its text has never been published anywhere.

"But a most significant and important incident took place during the afternoon at Linz. In view of the fact that no reaction whatsoever was forthcoming from any of the European capitals, the Fuehrer had decided to precipitate matters and to proclaim the annexation even before the announcement of a plebiscite had been made. His decision was made at 5 P.M., and the first words from which this decision could be gathered were spoken actually at 5.15 P.M. in Linz by Herr Himmler, chief of the German S.S., who said: 'Germans of Austria! We are proud of you and of the heroic struggle which you have endured for five years. *We shall have one Fuehrer and one Reich!*'"

"Immediately Dr. Seyss-Inquart returned to Vienna by air and received—or did not receive—the resignation of the Federal President. At any rate, he treated the situation as if he had received it. At 8.30 P.M. he read from the balcony of the Chancellery the decree whose first article was: Austria is a country of the German Reich."

So much for the account of a neutral observer in closest touch with the events, whose authority, it may be repeated, is beyond doubt.

We turn again to the fateful night of March 11, 1938.

That night the Cabinets of London, Paris, Rome, and Prague met to consider steps to be taken in face of the situation.

A strong protest was sent to Berlin by the Governments of Great Britain and France, and France made inquiries in Rome as to whether Italy was ready, in execution of the Stresa Pact, to take joint action with her and prevent Herr Hitler's march into Austria with the force of arms. Signor Mussolini not only refused to take part in any armed action but also declined to join in a protest of the powers in Berlin. While it had been hoped in Vienna during the night that joint steps by the Great Powers would at least save Austrian independence, it was learned already on Saturday that Italy had unconditionally sacrificed her former ally.

It seemed incredible. Italy, who on July 25, 1934, had mobilized her troops to prevent Hitler from marching into Austria, on March 11, 1938, quietly bowed to her annexation! It was all the more incredible since Italy up to the very last moment had expressed her interest in the independence of Austria, and had declared that she put the Rome Pact before all other agreements. What was not known in Austria, nor in fact anywhere in the world, was that Germany had succeeded in convincing Signor Mussolini that Dr. Schuschnigg was trying to form a People's Front with the help of the Communists and the Social Democrats.

Two things had induced Signor Mussolini, at the very last moment, to abandon the Austrian cause. The first was Dr. Schuschnigg's endeavours, against the official Italian advice, to conduct at the eleventh hour, with the help of the workers, a true and genuine plebiscite in Austria—in other words, to make a last attempt to return to democracy. Secondly, Mussolini had received on the Friday a personal letter from Herr Hitler carried to him by air personally by the Prince of Hesse, son-in-law of King Victor Emmanuel. Although this letter is a very long one, it deserves to be reproduced here in its full text. It is one of the most illuminating, if not *the* most illuminating document in this connexion. It runs as follows:

BERLIN, *March 11th*, 1938.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,

"In an hour charged with destiny I write to your Excellency to inform you of a decision which appears to be imposed by circumstances and is now immutable. For years the Germans of Austria have been oppressed and ill-treated by a régime without any legal basis. There is no end to the suffering of countless persecuted. Germany alone has sheltered so far more than forty thousand refugees who had to abandon their country, although the great majority of the inhabitants of Austria fully share their ideology and their political ideas.

"With a view to removing tension steadily becoming more unbearable I decided to make a final effort to conclude with Herr von Schuschnigg an agreement which could definitely establish complete equality for all under the law. At our con-

versation at Berchtesgaden I called the attention of Herr von Schuschnigg to the fact that Germany could no longer tolerate the ill-treatment by a feeble minority in Austria of a majority with national ideas. I myself am a son of this land. Austria is my fatherland, and I know from my own family connexions all the tribulations and suffering which the immense majority of this people has to bear for the national ideas it fosters.

"I drew his attention to the fact that a great Power—I may indeed say that this is the sole case of the kind in the world—could not tolerate that people of the same blood and with the same origin, with a common historical past, should for these very reasons be persecuted, ill-treated, and deprived of their rights. I also made it known to Herr von Schuschnigg that, if equality of rights for all the Germans of Austria was not re-established, we should one day be compelled to take over the protection of these brothers of ours abandoned by all.

"The demands I made were more than moderate. In fact, according to all the principles of reason, right and equity, and even according to those of democratic formalism, Herr von Schuschnigg ought to have resigned with his Cabinet, so as to make room for a Government effectively supported by a people's confidence. I did not insist on this. I contented myself with a series of assurances that in the future, within the framework of the existing Austrian laws, unjust though their origin may be, all the inhabitants of that country should be treated equally—equally favoured or equally discriminated against—and that finally a certain security should be created in the military sphere.

"Herr von Schuschnigg gave me solemn assurances and concluded with me an agreement in this sense. From the very first he did not respect this agreement. To-day, too, he has struck a new blow against this agreement by decreeing a so-called consultation of the people which represents a very mockery of any plebiscite. The results of this new projected attack on the popular majority are those I feared. The Austrian people is now definitely revolting against the continued oppression, with fresh violence, as the inevitable result. Hence the representatives of this oppressed people, both in the federal and provincial Governments, have resigned.

"For the last two days the country has been rapidly declining into anarchy. As Fuehrer and Chancellor of the German Reich, and also as a son of this land, I can no longer remain inactive in face of this development of events. I have decided to re-establish order in my fatherland, order and tranquillity, and to give the popular will the possibility of settling its own fate in unmistakable fashion, openly and by its own destiny.

"However this wish may be fulfilled I would assure your Excellency, you who are the Duce of Fascist Italy, most solemnly of one thing. Do not see in this anything but an act of legitimate national defence, an act which any man of my character in my place would perform in the same way. You, too, Your Excellency, could not act differently if the fate of Italians were at stake. I, as Fuehrer and as National-Socialist, cannot do otherwise.

"In a critical hour for Italy I showed you the constancy of my feelings. Do not fear that there will be any change in this respect in the future. Whatever may be the result of coming events I have fixed a definite frontier for Germany on the French side, and now I fix another, equally definite, on the Italian—the Brenner. This decision will never be subject to doubt or alteration. It was not made by me in the year 1938, but immediately after the Great War, and I have never made any mystery of it.

"I beg your Excellency to excuse me first of all for the haste of this letter and the form of this communication. Events have overtaken us all unexpectedly. Nobody has been apprised of Herr von Schuschnigg's last step, not even his colleagues in the Government, and I had always hoped up to to-day that perhaps at the last moment another solution might have been possible. I deeply regret that I cannot speak with you personally at this time to tell you all I feel.

"With unchanged friendship,

"Yours,

"ADOLF HITLER."

In reply to this letter Signor Mussolini had the following communication published on the morning of March 13, 1938:

"The Minister for Foreign Affairs has been able to follow

the development of the situation in Austria from day to day, thanks to the ample and constant reports he has received from the Italian representatives abroad.

"The Austrian Government have informed the Italian Government only *post factum* of the results of the Berchtesgaden agreement and of the measures which they have taken in consequence.¹

"The Italian Government have decided, for obvious reasons, not to interfere in any way in Austria's internal politics and in this development of a national movement, the logical outcome of which can be clearly foreseen.

"The Austrian Chancellor's sudden decision to hold a plebiscite was not only not suggested by the Italian Government, but was actually contrary to the advice tendered to him as soon as they were made aware of the decision, both as regards the manner, the substance, and the form of the plebiscite proposed.

"The Fascist Grand Council regards the events in Austria as the outcome of a pre-existent state of affairs, and as the free expression of the will of the Austrian people, plainly manifested by the imposing popular demonstrations which have followed them.

"The Council has listened with profound interest to the letter regarding the events in Austria which Signor Mussolini has received from Herr Hitler.

"The Fascist Grand Council have declined a French invitation to take part in concerted action against Germany on the ground that it would be groundless and purposeless and would merely render the international situation more difficult."

It cannot and must not be denied that, tactically speaking, Dr. Schuschnigg made fatal mistakes in his dealings with Italy. It may well be contended that during the last years he not only gave offence to Signor Mussolini but, particularly during the last weeks of his chancellorship, irritated Herr Hitler more than he could afford to do without definite support from else-

¹ This is the perfect truth. The Austrian Government did not actually immediately inform the Italian Government of the Berchtesgaden agreement, for the simple reason that Signor Mussolini, as has already been stated, *did not want to be informed*, and that from February 12 to 15 he was inaccessible to the Austrian Government, be it by telephone or otherwise, although continued efforts had been made in Vienna to get into touch with him.

where. The style and the argument of his great speech of February 24, it may be held, would have been more justifiable diplomatically if he had been backed by real and effective guarantees from the Great Powers; and that, lacking these, he would have done better to steer a cautious middle course without irritating either Hitler or Mussolini, until the Anglo-Italian agreement was concluded and Italy was no longer dependent to the same degree on Germany's support. Italy might then have adopted a different attitude towards the Austrian question, with decisive effect on the outcome.

How far this argument is sound and justified it is difficult to say. It becomes less tenable in the light of Signor Mussolini's speech on May 14, 1938, two months after the Anschluss and immediately after Herr Hitler's visit to Italy, when he dwelt once more on the Austrian question and declared:

"At 6 P.M. on March 11 Italy once more found herself at a cross-roads which called for a decision. On that choice might depend disorder, peace or war, and therefore the destiny of Europe. But since the events did not take us by surprise and had been foreseen in their logical development, we replied immediately and decisively 'No!' to a certain diplomatic overture made to us [by France, for joint action]. All that has happened since shows that we were inspired by wisdom. To those people beyond the mountains who still have the melancholy ingenuousness to remind us of what we did in 1934 we reply that since that year much water has flowed through the bridges of the Tiber, the Danube, the Spree, the Thames, and even of the Seine. During that period Italy, engaged in a gigantic and bloody effort, saw sanctions—which we have not yet forgotten—applied to her. *Meanwhile everything diplomatic and political which passed under the name of Stresa was dead and buried, and as far as we are concerned it will never be resuscitated.* It was the sense of our duty and of our honour and of our loyal friendship towards Germany which decided us to do what we have done. Now these two worlds, the Germanic and the Roman, are in immediate contact. Their friendship is lasting."

So much for Italy.

In Czechoslovakia, Austria's other immediate neighbour, feeling on that night of March 11 was somewhat different, in fact, things were in the balance in Prague. Individual Czechoslovak ministers have later revealed that a Council of Ministers convoked immediately after the arrival of the first dispatches from Austria discussed until late at night the advisability of an immediate mobilization of the Czechoslovakian army and swift military action in Austria.

If finally in the small hours of the morning it was decided to refrain from such action, although it was evident that the occupation of Austria eventually might mean the end also of Czechoslovakia, it was because of one consideration only, namely that, owing to the traditionally good relations between Austria and Czechoslovakia, the southern frontier of Czechoslovakia was completely unprotected. It was known in Prague that the German divisions garrisoned in Bavaria and Wuerttemberg were already on their march to Vienna, and it was clear that these troops would reach the Austro-Czechoslovakian frontier more quickly than the Czechoslovak troops could mobilize. German armies would have been able actually to enter Czechoslovakian territory without hindrance, and no line of defence stood in the way of Prague itself and Brno, attacked from the south.

Furthermore, Germany might have interpreted Czech interference as an action of aggression and not of defence, and the outbreak of a new world war might have resulted. Finally on the night of March 11 a declaration by Field-Marshal Goering having been conveyed to Prague, by which the Reich Government pledged itself unconditionally to respect Czechoslovak integrity, the Prague Government decided, in the early hours of March 12, to abstain from any steps in support of Austria and "to persist in the policy of calm and sangfroid which had only recently been formulated by Dr. Hodza, the Premier, and which was supported by Czechoslovak public opinion."

In Vienna, meanwhile, mass arrests and mass flight had begun in the course of the night itself of March 11. Besides Dr. Schuschnigg those arrested within the next few hours after

the Chancellor's resignation included the burgomaster of Vienna, Herr Schmitz; the Chiefs of the Government Press Department, Colonel Adam and Minister Ludwig, with their entire staff; the chief councillor of the Foreign Office, Minister Hornbostel; all immediate collaborators of Dr. Schuschnigg and Herr Schmitz; the Archbishop of Salzburg, Dr. Waitz; the majority of the Provincial Governors; the leader of the Monarchist movement, Baron Wiesner; the two sons of the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the Dukes Max and Ernst of Hohenberg; all leading members of the Vienna Israelite *Kultusgemeinde*; a number of journalists, officials of the Broadcasting Corporation, and of the official newsagency, and many more.

The deputy-leader of the Patriotic Front, Minister Zernatto, and Herr Stockinger, the former Minister of Commerce, were the only members of Dr. Schuschnigg's Cabinet who managed to cross the Austrian border by car in time. Already at 10 P.M., by order of the Prague Government, the Czechoslovak frontier towards Austria had been closed. A few hours later the Hungarian border was closed as well against all Austrian citizens. The grotesque situation arose that the Austrian frontier officials permitted the stream of refugees to pass unhindered—the frontier officials during those early hours of the night being still the old officials of Dr. Schuschnigg's administration—but that the refugees who believed themselves already safe were turned back by the Czechoslovak and Hungarian posts. The Czechoslovak and Hungarian frontiers being at a distance only of an hour and a half by car from Vienna, as against ten hours for the Yugoslav, and twelve to fourteen by train journey for the Italian and Swiss, it was only natural that the bulk of refugees streamed towards these former frontiers. The only persons who succeeded in getting across that night were those who moved as early as between 6 and 7 P.M.—that is, immediately after the announcement of the cancellation of Dr. Schuschnigg's plebiscite. The small corner of the so-called "Dreilaender-Ecke", where the frontiers of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Austria meet, witnessed the most distressing scenes of despair that night. Along the entire length of this frontier belt, over one hundred miles, thousands of deserted

Austrian cars could be seen the next morning. Normal entry being refused, many of the refugees left their cars and their entire belongings behind and tried to cross the frontier on foot at certain unguarded places, and some succeeded. But many thousands had to return.

The first suicides actually took place during that night of despair, in some cases under the eyes of the frontier guards, in others in Vienna, where not only those sent back preferred to end their lives than to spend them in prison, but also those who saw their entire existence destroyed, sought refuge in ending it at once, with a revolver, a piece of rope, a gas-tap, or a jump from a window or in front of a train. From that night of March 11 until the day I write there has not been one single day but has brought its toll of misery ended, and the number does not abate.

Towards four o'clock in the morning of March 12 I finally tried to find my way home in a taxi covered with swastika flags, through the streets of Vienna still thronged with shouting and yelling masses of people. I had been on duty for almost forty-eight hours without interruption and was well near exhaustion. Frankly, I hoped for nothing but a few hours of sound sleep.

But there was no sleep.

I had hardly gone to bed when I was again woken by a heavy noise which at first I was at a loss to explain. Hurrying to the window and looking out into the first dim haze of grey morning light, I saw the sky virtually darkened by an endless chain of aeroplanes. The machines flew in three formations one above the other. The big bombers were the lowest, and the release apparatus of their deadly charge could be clearly seen. Above them flew chasers, and above them again light sports and reconnoitring machines.

Between 400 and 500 machines of the German air force were over Vienna.

The noise of their motors was so terrible that at times I virtually felt my house tremble and shake, and after a few seconds I felt an almost maddening buzzing in the ears. For

more than five minutes the machines kept circling directly above my house.

That was the advance guard of the German army "marching" into Vienna. With each of these aeroplanes a number of German soldiers arrived; they were landed at Aspern aerodrome and transported by cars and lorries into the city. By five o'clock in the morning the following had landed at Aspern: Herr Himmler, the Reich Leader of the S.S., together with leading staff officers of the German Police Force; General Daluge, Group-Leader Heydrich, Group-Leader Jest, Standard-Leader Mueller, and Lieutenant-Colonel Meissner. A few hours later the German police took over the Vienna police, the majority of whom had already during the night made common cause with the National-Socialists and were on duty with swastika armlets on their uniforms.

Herr Hitler himself left Berlin by air on Saturday, March 12, at 8.05 A.M. for Munich, whence he proceeded by car into Austria. He crossed the Austrian frontier near Braunau at 3.50 P.M. and arrived at his native town at four o'clock. Four hours later he was in Linz, which in the early hours of the day had been occupied by the German troops, and where his supporters gave him a frenzied ovation.

He was greeted on his arrival by Dr. Seyss-Inquart, who in a speech addressed to the Fuehrer solemnly declared Article 88 of the Treaty of St. Germain, the clause forbidding the union of Germany and Austria, as null and void.

Herr Hitler, in his reply, could not refrain from once more calling to memory the way he had left Austria in 1912. "When I set out from this town, years ago," he said, "I carried with me the same deep and faithful conviction which fills me to-day. Imagine my innermost emotion now that I have after so many long years brought fulfilment to that faithful conviction."

He had reached his goal. He had achieved those things for which he had been striving ever since his enforced departure from his homeland. He had come back to his native land not as a poor house-painter's apprentice, but as its conqueror, and as leader and mighty master of Greater Germany.

For twenty-six years the worm had been gnawing at him.



The vanguard of the German Army alighting from troop-carrying aeroplanes at Aspern aerodrome, Vienna, on March 13, 1938.

Ullrich & Pöhl

Now, at last, he had succeeded in striking his native country off the map of Europe!

More than 200,000 troops of the German army, and almost 100,000 German police, S.A., S.S., and other formations, marched into Austria during the morning of March 12, 1938. And apart from the fact that a considerable number of German tanks and motor-lorries had broken down on their way, this march proceeded exactly on the lines of a carefully prepared and premeditated plan.

And the plan was that very plan which, together with the rest of the Tavs Documents, had been found on January 26 in the Teinfaltstrasse in Vienna.

Not only had each route for each single unit been precisely drawn up in advance, but the troops had been billeted in advance in their quarters and barracks, food was in store and ready at hand, every little detail had been provided for, and the whole procedure developed, except for the tanks, without the slightest hitch. And the Austrian army and police, to exclude at once every possible unpleasant eventuality, were immediately sent on a "return visit" to Germany!

The first German motorized detachments and armoured cars arrived in Vienna in the course of the Saturday, having been transported to Vienna partly by railway. Tanks and armoured cars were posted in the streets of the city, anti-aircraft guns brought into position at two places along the Ringstrasse, squadrons of aeroplanes and single planes circled continually over the town by day and night, and at night huge searchlights played on the clouds above Vienna, searching, as many thought, for Czechoslovak and Soviet machines, of which there was no little fear during those first nights.

Vienna had become an army camp. All schools were closed to provide quarters for the troops. The ice rink of the Vienna skating club had to be closed to harbour the headquarters of the German police with their baggage-lorries and field-kitchens. On Sunday, March 13, the number of regular troops, police, and party formations in Vienna alone was estimated at more than 200,000 men. The larger and more fashionable hotels were exclusively reserved for German officers.

This Sunday witnessed the first "requisitions" and the first anti-Jewish outrages.

Shops suspected of Jewish ownership were broken into by force and looted, under the pretext that not only had the German troops to be provided with foodstuffs, but also that the Austrian Storm Troopers and Black Guards whose equipment was still lamentably incomplete had to be given "adequate outfit". Plundering therefore did not confine itself to food shops: clothes, shoe, and arms shops were affected—and, curiously, some jewellers' shops. At first "requisitions" took place with the assistance and under the supervision of the regular police, but soon the Austrian Storm Troopers and Black Guards proceeded alone and entirely according to individual judgment and taste. It soon got round that it was an easy thing to get hold of a swastika armband, to fasten it to one's sleeve, to fit out five or six of one's friends similarly, and to break into shops under the name of "flying squad" of the S.A. or the S.S. The police, even if they were in the neighbourhood, hardly ever had the courage to prevent looting. Sometimes shopkeepers were bold enough to ask to be shown warrants or signed orders, and in such cases "flying squads" often vanished as quickly as they had come, to try their luck elsewhere.

On Sunday March 13 the following decree was promulgated in Vienna:

"In accordance with Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Federal Constitution concerning extraordinary measures of emergency within the limits of the Constitution, BGBl. No. 255/1934, the Federal Government declares:

Article 1. Austria is a country of the German Reich.

Article 2. On Sunday April 10, 1938, a free and secret plebiscite will be held by all German men and women in Austria above the age of 20 on the reunion of Austria with the German Reich.

Article 3. The issue of the plebiscite will be decided by the simple majority of all votes cast."

This decree was grotesque for two reasons.

First, it ordered a plebiscite to be held on an issue which by virtue of its preceding Article 1. had already been made an accomplished fact.

Secondly, it decreed that "all *German* men and women" of Austria were to vote. By this definition the Jews were in fact excluded from taking part in the plebiscite, but all Czechoslovaks and Croats in Austria, numbering almost 200,000 were *compelled* to vote.

Simultaneously by a separate decree the Austrian Army was incorporated in the German Army.

President Miklas, who would have never given his consent to such a decision, had already been forced to resign. His place as Federal President was taken by Dr. Seyss-Inquart.

Thus a chain of events developing in rapid succession within a few days and nights reached its close. The statement made on it by the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, in the House of Commons on March 14, 1938, is the only comprehensive survey of this dramatic development to have come from an official source outside Germany and Austria. Besides the fact that it states the attitude of the British Government at one of the most serious junctures in post-War European history, it is very important if for no other reason than that it contains the text of one of the most memorable documents produce on this occasion, the letter addressed by Baron Neurath, President of the German Secret Cabinet Council, to Sir Nevile Henderson, British Ambassador to Berlin. For that alone it would be incomplete not to reproduce here in full the statement of the British Prime Minister:

The result of the meeting at Berchtesgaden on February 12 between the German and Austrian Chancellors was stated by the former to be an extension of the framework of the July, 1936, Agreement. Hon. and right hon. gentlemen will recollect that that agreement provided, among other things for the recognition of the independence of Austria by Germany and the recognition by Austria of the fact that she was a German State. Therefore, whatever were the results of the Berchtesgaden meeting, it is clear that the agreement reached was on the basis of the independence of Austria.

On Wednesday of last week Herr von Schuschnigg decided that the best way to put an end to the uncertainties of the internal situation in his country was to hold a plebiscite under which the people could decide the future of their country. Provision for that plebiscite was made in the Austrian Constitution of 1934. This decision on the part of the Austrian Chancellor was unwelcome to the German Government, as it was also unwelcome to the Austrian National-Socialists themselves.

Matters appear to have come to a head on the morning of March 11, when Herr von Seyss-Inquart, who had been appointed Minister of the Interior as a result of the Berchtesgaden meeting, together with his colleague, Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, presented an ultimatum to the Chancellor. They demanded the abandonment of the plebiscite, and threatened that if this was refused the Nazis would abstain from voting and could not be restrained from causing serious disturbances during the poll. The two Ministers also demanded changes in the provincial Governments and other bodies.

They required an answer from the Chancellor, so I am informed, before 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The Chancellor declined to accept this ultimatum, but offered a compromise under which a second plebiscite should be held later, with regular voting lists. In the meantime, he said, he would be prepared to make it clear that voters might vote for his policy as against him personally, in order to prove that the plebiscite was not a personal question of his remaining in office.

Later that day, feeling himself to be under threat of civil war and a possible military invasion, the Chancellor gave way to the two Ministers and agreed to cancel the plebiscite on condition that the tranquillity of the country was not disturbed by the Nazis. There seems to be little doubt that this offer was referred to Germany. In any event the reply which the Ministers returned was that this offer was insufficient and that Herr von Schuschnigg must resign in order to be replaced by Herr von Seyss-Inquart. It appears that the Austrian Chancellor was given until 4.30 p.m. Greenwich time in which to reply and was informed that if his reply was not satisfactory German troops would be ordered to move at 5 o'clock. *This fact seems to show that Germany was behind the ultimatum.*

Later in the day a fresh ultimatum was delivered, which appears to have been brought from Germany by aeroplane. The demands made were the resignation of the Chancellor and his replacement by the Minister of the Interior, a new Cabinet of which two-thirds were to be National-Socialists, the Austrian Legion to be re-admitted to the country and given the duty of keeping order in Vienna, and the total readmission of the Nazi Party. A reply

was required before 6.30 p.m. Greenwich time. To these demands the Austrian Chancellor announced, a little later on the wireless, that he had, in view of the German threatened invasion, yielded in order to avoid the shedding of German blood. He said that he wished the world to know that the President and he had yielded to force and that Austrian troops had been instructed to oppose no resistance to German troops if and when the latter crossed the frontier. The subsequent entry of German troops into Austria and the visit of the German Chancellor to Linz will be known to hon. Members.

His Majesty's Government have throughout been in the closest touch with the situation. The Foreign Secretary saw the German Foreign Minister on March 10 and addressed to him a grave warning on the Austrian situation and upon what appeared to be the policy of the German Government in regard to it. In particular, Lord Halifax told him that his Majesty's Government attached the greatest importance to all measures being taken to ensure that the plebiscite was carried out without interference or intimidation.

Later on March 11 our Ambassador in Berlin registered a protest in strong terms with the German Government against such use of coercion, backed by force, against an independent State in order to create a situation incompatible with its national independence. Such action, Sir Neville Henderson pointed out, was bound to produce the gravest reactions, of which it would be impossible to foretell the issue.

Earlier that day I made earnest representations in the same sense to the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, with whom my noble friend also had two further conversations on that day. To these protests the German Government replied in a letter addressed to his Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin by Baron von Neurath. I think I should read the terms of that communication in full. They are as follows

“MONSIEUR L'AMBASSADEUR,—In your letter of March 11 your Excellency stated that news had reached the British Government that a German ultimatum had been delivered in Vienna demanding the resignation of the Austrian Chancellor, his substitution by the Minister of the Interior, the formation of a new Cabinet with a two-thirds majority of National-Socialist members, and the readmission of the Austrian Legion. Should this news be correct the British Government protested against such coercion by force against an independent State in order to create a situation incompatible with the national independence.

“In the name of the German Government, I must state in

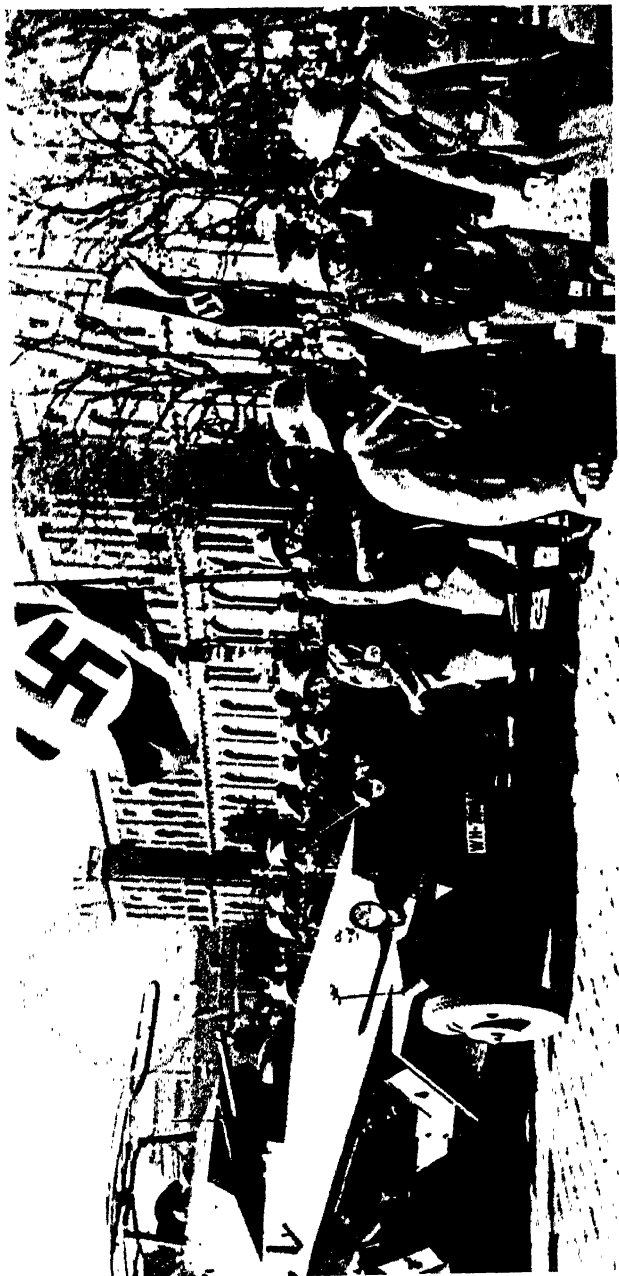
reply that the British Government is not within its right in claiming the role of protector of the independence of Austria. In the course of the diplomatic conversations regarding the Austrian question the German Government have never left the British Government in doubt that the form of the relations between the Reich and Austria can only be regarded as an internal affair of the German people which is no concern of third Powers. It is superfluous to recapitulate the historical and political bases of this standpoint.

"For this reason the German Government must from the outset reject as inadmissible the protest lodged by the British Government, even though only conditional. At the same time in view of the information quoted in your letter that the Reich Government had made demands of the character of an ultimatum in Vienna the German Government does not desire to omit, in the interests of truth, to make the following statement respecting the events of the last few days.

"A few weeks ago the German Chancellor, recognizing the dangers resulting from the intolerable position which has risen in Austria, initiated a conversation with the then Austrian Chancellor. The aim was to make yet another attempt to meet these dangers by agreement upon measures which should ensure a calm and peaceful development in consonance with the interests of both countries and with those of the whole German people. The Berchtesgaden agreement, having been loyally carried out on the Austrian side in the spirit of the conversation of February 12, would in fact have guaranteed such a development.

"Instead of this, the former Austrian Federal Chancellor, on the evening of March 9, announced the surprising decision, taken on his sole authority, to hold within a period of a few days a plebiscite which, having regard to the surrounding circumstances and in particular the detailed plans for the carrying out of the plebiscite, was intended to have, as it could only have, as its purpose the political repression of the overwhelming majority of the population of Austria. This proceeding, standing as it did in flagrant contradiction to the Berchtesgaden agreement, led, as might have been foreseen, to an extremely critical development of the internal situation in Austria.

"It was only natural that those members of the Austrian Government who had taken no part in the decision to hold a plebiscite should raise the strongest protest against it. In consequence there ensued a Cabinet crisis in Vienna, which in the course of March 11 led to the resignation of the former Federal Chancellor and the formation of a new Government.



AP/WIDE WORLD

German troops with an armoured car in the streets of Vienna on March 14, 1938.

It is not true that forcible pressure on the course of these developments was exercised by the Reich. In particular the statement subsequently spread by the former Federal Chancellor—to the effect that the German Government had delivered an ultimatum with a time-limit to the Federal President, in accordance with which he was to appoint as Federal Chancellor one of certain proposed candidates and construct the Government in conformity with the proposals of the German Government, failing which the entry of German troops into Austria would have to be contemplated—is pure imagination. As a matter of fact the question of the dispatch of military and police forces from the Reich was first raised by the fact that the newly formed Austrian Government addressed to the Government of the Reich, in a telegram which has already been published in the Press, an urgent request that, for the re-establishment of peace and order and for the prevention of blood-shed, German troops should be dispatched as soon as possible. Faced with the directly threatening danger of a bloody civil war in Austria, the Government of the Reich decided to meet the appeal then addressed to it.

“Such being the case it is completely inconceivable that the conduct of the German Government, as is stated in your letter, could lead to unforeseeable consequences. A general review of the political situation is given in the proclamation which the Chancellor of the German Reich addressed at noon to-day to the German people. In this situation dangerous consequences could only come into play if an attempt should be made by any third party, in contradiction to the peaceful intentions and legitimate aims of the Reich, to exercise on the development of the situation in Austria an influence inconsistent with the right of the German people to self-determination.

“Accept, &c.,

“FREIHERR VON NEURATH.”

I do not wish to enter into any long argument about the historical narrative of events as described by Baron von Neurath, but I am bound at once to refute his statement to the effect that his Majesty's Government were not within their rights in interesting themselves in the independence of Austria and that as in the opinion of the German Government relations between Austria and Germany are a purely internal affair his Majesty's Government as a third party have no concern in them. The interest of his Majesty's Government in this question cannot, however, on any tenable ground be denied.

In the first place Great Britain and Austria are both members of the League and both were signatories, as was also the German

Government, of treaties which provided that the independence of Austria was inalienable except with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations. Quite apart from this his Majesty's Government are and always must be interested in developments in Central Europe, particularly events such as those which have just taken place, if only for the reason as I stated in the House only a fortnight ago that the object of all their policy has been to assist in the establishment of a sense of greater security and confidence in Europe, and that that object as I said then must inevitably be helped or hindered by events in Central Europe.

Throughout these events his Majesty's Government have remained in the closest touch with the French Government, and the French Government have I understand also entered a strong protest in Berlin on similar lines to that lodged by his Majesty's Government. It seems to us that the methods adopted throughout these events call for the severest condemnation and have administered a profound shock to all who are interested in the preservation of European peace. It follows that what has passed cannot fail to have prejudiced the hope of his Majesty's Government of removing misunderstandings between nations and promoting international cooperation.

It might seem unnecessary to refute rumours that his Majesty's Government had given consent, if not encouragement, to the idea of the absorption of Austria by Germany, were there not evidence that these are being sedulously put about in many quarters. There is, of course, no foundation whatever for any of these rumours. The statement which I have already made shows clearly that his Majesty's Government emphatically disapprove, as they have always disapproved, actions such as those of which Austria has been made the scene.

The House may desire me to repeat what our position in regard to Austria was. We were under no commitment to take action *vis-à-vis* Austria, but we were pledged to consultation with the French and Italian Governments in the event of action being taken which affected Austrian independence and integrity for which provision was made by the relevant articles of the Peace Treaty. This pledge arises from agreement reached between the French, Italian, and United Kingdom Governments first in February 1934, then in September of the same year, and finally at the Stresa Conference in April 1935, in which the position was reaffirmed to consult together in any measures to be taken in the case of threats to the integrity and independence of Austria. We have fully discharged the pledge of consultation with both the French Government and the Italian Government, to whom we made an immediate

approach when Austrian independence seemed to be threatened by recent events.

As a result of that consultation with the French Government his Majesty's Government and the French Government addressed similar protests to the German Government on the action that had been taken. From the Italian Government we received no full exposition of their views, but their attitude has been defined with great precision in the statement issued on behalf of the Italian Government which appears in the Press to-day.

It is quite untrue to suggest that we have ever given Germany our assent or our encouragement to the effective absorption of Austria into the German Reich. We have indeed never refused to recognize the special interest that Germany had in the development of relations between Austria and herself having regard to the close affinities existing between the two countries. But on every occasion on which any representative of his Majesty's Government has had opportunities to discuss these matter with representatives of the German Government it has always been made plain that his Majesty's Government would strongly disapprove of the application to the solution of these problems of violent methods.

It must have, as I have constantly pointed out to the House, a damaging influence upon general confidence in Europe. In appraising recent events it is necessary to face facts however we may judge them, however we may anticipate that they will react upon the international position as it exists to-day. The hard fact is—and of its truth every hon. member can judge for himself—that nothing could have arrested this action by Germany unless we and others with us had been prepared to use force to prevent it.

I imagine that according to the temperament of the individual the events which are in our minds to-day will be the cause of regret, of sorrow, perhaps of indignation. They cannot be regarded by his Majesty's Government with indifference or equanimity. They are bound to have effects which cannot yet be measured. The immediate result must be to intensify the sense of uncertainty and insecurity in Europe.

The Curtain Falls

THUS FALLS the curtain over Austria. The life of an independent state, one of the oldest in Europe, has come to its close; but the life of its people goes on.

What sort of life is it?

On the morning of Saturday, March 12, 1938, the former capital and "residential city" of Austria woke up as a German provincial town. And with its character its face had changed too.

By order of the new National-Socialist Government swastika flags hung from every house in Vienna. Since, until that day, they had been forbidden, enormous black swastikas had to be painted with ink on to the former Austrian red-white-red flags. These provisional flags were to be replaced, as far as possible before Herr Hitler's arrival on the Monday, by original German swastika flags. German thoroughness set to work immediately. The exact length of every flag was officially prescribed, respectively for windows, electric poles, trees in the Ringstrasse, shops, balconies, and for everywhere they had to be displayed. The City Hall and the Chancellery, the former building of the Patriotic Front, now re-named the "Brown House", all public buildings, railway stations, and schools were completely bedecked with swastika flags. Smaller flags, streamers and pennons had to be shown in windows, and "obelisks of liberation", also draped with swastikas and bunting, were erected on St. Stephen's Square, the Graben, the Mariahilferstrasse, and in many other parts of the town.

The swastika was predominant in the same way in the streets. Taxi-drivers were ordered to decorate their cabs with swastikas, the police marched with huge swastika armlets, and swastikas large and small appeared in every conceivable "Aryan" button-hole. Crossing the wide courtyard of the Central Post Office into the Inner City that morning, I saw four youngsters of about

sixteen years of age adorned with huge swastika armlets knocking the huge bust of Chancellor Dollfuss into bits with big hammers, until not a trace was left of it. The same fate came to every other Dollfuss bust and memorial plaque in Vienna and the whole of Austria.

Most of Vienna's public buildings were already occupied in the early hours of the day by German troops, police, and detachments of the Austrian Storm Troops and Black Guards. But private houses and residences as well, whose inhabitants were either arrested or had fled the country, were occupied and converted into quarters for the "protection troops", such as the Rothschild Palais opposite Belvedere Castle, the Palais Schaechner, many town houses of the former aristocracy who were being persecuted on account of their Monarchist sympathies, as well as a great number of villas in the fashionable residential quarters of Hietzing and the "cottage suburb".

More and more smashed shop windows and forced shutters marked the way of the requisitioning "flying squads". Particularly in the Leopoldstadt, Vienna's Jewish quarter, there was hardly a shop that was not closed or wrecked and plundered. In the windows of the large shops in the Inner City, especially in the Kaerntnerstrasse, maps of Europe appeared in huge scale showing not only the amalgamation of Austria with the German Reich but also, in striking colours, all those other parts of Europe where Germans live and which are therefore claimed by the Reich, including Signor Mussolini's southern Tyrol and Alsace-Lorraine.

Traffic in the streets of Vienna witnessed from the first hours of the German occupation a thorough change. All cars owned by Jews and half-Jews, by supporters of the former Government and Legitimists, were immediately confiscated by the S.A. and the S.S. Large cardboard signs with the inscription "S.A. Command! Keep clear!" were fixed to their bonnets, and instead of experienced and cautious drivers youths of between seventeen and twenty-one years of age drove them furiously through the narrow little streets of the town, heedless of traffic lights, driving suddenly on the right instead of the left according to the German rule, and so forth. Although these cars were confiscated and were used for party purposes, their owners were

obliged not only to pay for repairs and fuel, but in many cases to wash them and keep them in order. And even on the Sunday Vienna was crammed with German cars from the Reich, which had come in by the thousand.

The Austrian Press was efficiently and completely unified with the German Press on Saturday, March 12. A number of papers of more democratic tendencies were completely suppressed and did not reappear. Among them were the *Stunde*, the *Telegraf*, the *Tag*, the *Echo*, the *Morgen*, and the *Neuigkeitsweltblatt*. Some of them, like *Telegraf* and others, reappeared a few hours later with an entirely new lay-out as National-Socialist party organs. Other papers remained outwardly unchanged, only adorned with large swastikas on their front pages: readers were informed that all these papers were now "purified" and completely "Aryan". The *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna's best-known newspaper, was the only one to be permitted to continue to appear without swastikas and in a slightly more moderate tone. In addition there appeared Vienna editions of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* and of the *Schwarze Korps*, the organ of the German Black Guards which devoted itself almost exclusively to vigorous propaganda against all enemies of the National-Socialist régime.

Newspaper attacks were directed chiefly against:

Supporters of Dr. Schuschnigg's Government and of the Patriotic Front.

Monarchists.

Jews.

The comparative leniency which the Austrian National-Socialists had observed towards the Jews in their campaign up to March 11 had come to an abrupt end, and a sharp anti-Semitic drive began. The reason for this, and in particular for the arrest of several thousands of Jews and the dissolution of the relief organizations of the Vienna Israelite "Kultusgemeinde", the only organization which would have been able to offer a little help to distressed Jews, was a gift of money which the Kultusgemeinde had made over to Dr. Schuschnigg

for the purpose of his plebiscite. This gift of money became the fatal blow to the Jews of Vienna.

There are at least 300,000 Jews or baptized Jews in Vienna, in a total population of 1,800,000. In every section of the population inter-marriage between Jews and Gentiles, particularly between Jews and Catholics, had been so widespread over a long period that it had virtually embraced the entire population. It was only natural, therefore, that all these people were vitally interested in preventing the National-Socialists from coming to power. On March 9, when he announced his plebiscite, Dr. Schuschnigg had appealed specifically to the Israelite Kultusgemeinde of Vienna asking whether the Jews, to whom full equality of rights was guaranteed, were ready to contribute to the plebiscite fund and thus to enable propaganda for the Government to be carried out on a larger scale.

The Kultusgemeinde had agreed in principle, but for lack of time had got into touch with their most prominent members by telephone to ascertain whether and how much they would contribute. But since all Vienna telephones had been systematically tapped for three weeks by Dr. Seyss-Inquart's secret police it had been an easy thing to inform party headquarters of what was afoot. The Kultusgemeinde had succeeded in collecting within twenty-four hours the amount of 800,000 schilling (about £31,000), which was put at the disposal of the Government's propaganda fund. Thus when the Chancellery was occupied by the National-Socialists during the night of Friday, March 11, not only there, but also on the premises of the simultaneously occupied Kultusgemeinde, complete lists fell into their hands of all those who had contributed to the fund. In the course of Saturday not only were all officials of the Kultusgemeinde arrested but, almost without exception, all those whose names were on the lists of contributors. All these Jews were then told by the National-Socialists that they would either have to contribute once more the same amounts as they had given to Dr. Schuschnigg, towards the cost of the National-Socialist plebiscite, or remain under arrest until this amount had been collected from the sale of their shops and property. This position gave new cause for the plundering and looting of Jewish shops and factories.

From the day after the arrival of the Germans in Vienna "managing commissars" were installed, officially and unofficially, in all Jewish and non-Aryan enterprises. As early as February 15 (after the appointment of Dr. Seyss-Inquart) the National-Socialists were so certain of their ultimate victory that they had at once proceeded with extensive preparations for the "taking over" of Jewish enterprise. Detailed plans were drawn up and ready for every single office, shop, and factory, and these "managing commissars" designated for every one of them. Mostly they consisted of persons actually employed in the enterprises taken over—secretaries, salesmen, assistants, and in many cases chauffeurs and even messengers, in the employment of Jews in a smaller way. Each "managing commissar" was, of course, of known political standing.

During the very first days of the new régime all Jewish enterprises were branded with enormous glaring red inscriptions such as "Jew", "Jewish shop", and "Jewish coffee-house". Wherever Gentiles demonstratively entered these shops in spite of the warning, they were caught by S.A. and S.S. men upon leaving, and large posters were hung round their necks with the inscription "I, Aryan swine, have bought in a Jewish shop." But simultaneously it was decreed that Jewish shopowners were no longer entitled to dismiss their employees nor to decrease their salaries.

Persecution of the Jews reached its height between April 14 and 24, when at times it took the form of a regular pogrom. On Saturday, April 23, groups of Storm Troopers patrolled the streets of Vienna, where they laid hands on as many Jews as they could, particularly older ones. They put them into motor-lorries and drove them to the Prater, Vienna's large and world-famous amusement park. What followed was called "pleasure hours". At a command the kidnapped men, among whom were at times also women, and even pregnant women, had to run in circles until they fainted and collapsed. Those pretending to have fainted in order to escape the ordeal were beaten until they got up and ran again. Other groups were forced to practise "knee crooking" for several hours, and even old people with serious heart trouble were not exempted from

these "gymnastic lessons". At Floridsdorf a number of Jews were forced to run a certain distance carrying large buckets full of water; at a command they were to empty the buckets and throw themselves into the puddles. Those who did not do it properly had to repeat the exercise. Another favourite torture was the famous scenic railway in the Prater amusement park, where large numbers of Jews were forced into the carriages, tied to their seats, and then driven at top speed until they lost consciousness, which was usually after a few minutes. Hundreds of Jewish people were taken to hospital during the following days with severe heart attacks, and in no few cases these "pleasure hours" brought about heart-failure and death.

On the same day, April 23, 1938, a number of Jewish persons, mainly children and young girls, were forced to post themselves outside Jewish shops holding signs and posters to prevent customers from entering. The signs were to be held in such a way that they actually blocked the entrance. In many of these cases children and young girls had to stand like this for eight and ten hours without interruption, without being allowed to move, without receiving any food or being permitted to rest themselves against the doors or house-walls. Many of them collapsed through hunger and exhaustion.

An end was put to these excesses by Herr Buerckel when he returned to Vienna on April 25, but they are said to have caused friction and unpleasantness between the leaders of the German and of the Austrian National-Socialist parties respectively, ending in the Austrians receiving a severe rebuke.

Considerably worse things occurred in some of the provinces, particularly in the Burgenland where the Jewish population suffered most. What happened there can only be described as vandalism. Houses and shops, furniture and other properties were destroyed and reduced often to mere heaps. On the night of Easter Sunday fifty-one Jews of the Burgenland, people who were already deprived of everything they had once possessed, were driven away from their homes, put into boats and pushed out into the Danube. They were stranded on a sandbank in mid-river near the Czechoslovak frontier town of Bratislava, whose inhabitants heard their desperate cries for help in the morning and helped them. This particular case has become

known to the world in all its details, since the official Czechoslovak news agency did not hesitate to make it known.

The most important persons in Vienna, after March 11, were house-porters, servants, and postmen. Every house in Vienna has its own "Hausmeister", or porter, whose duty it is to clean the house, lock and open the front door and keep a general watch over the building. These porters naturally not only know everybody living in their buildings but are usually also on good terms with their servants, from whom they learn every little bit of family gossip. They and the servants frequently became and still remain agents and spies of the National-Socialists, informing them who in a particular house is a Jew, who is known to be a supporter of the former régime, what remarks, if any, he had made about National Socialism, who are his friends and acquaintances, what is his financial position and the like. In the Vienna of to-day it depends on what terms one is with one's servants and porters, and those of one's neighbour, whether one is molested or left in peace, and often whether one is arrested and has to fear for one's life. Ridiculous little incidents, a careless word spoken often many years ago, may be all that is needed to wreck a whole family's life.

During the first three months of National-Socialist rule in Austria, the campaign of revenge and terrorism took the three-fold form of arrests and abductions, of ill-treatment, and of house-searching and confiscations.

But many who suffered none of these persecutions found themselves under moral pressure they were incapable of enduring, and ended their lives.

The suicides of many persons in public life, of well-known politicians, scientists, writers, etc., are well known abroad; but they constitute only a small proportion of the tragedies which have taken place in Vienna and the rest of Austria since March 11, 1938. During March and April alone, between 1500 and 2000 suicides were reported in Austria, the greater part of which were in Vienna. In the night of March 19, sixty suicides were reported in Vienna, and during the worst days of the pogrom, between April 23 and 25, up to one hundred every day. With

terrible regularity the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna published every day a number of announcements of death, announcing that a whole family had "died suddenly and had been put to the rest they had so much longed for". This reference to the "rest they had so much longed for" invariably indicated that suicide was the cause of death. One of the most gruesome of these tragedies was that which befell Herr Max Bergmann, a well-known Vienna furniture manufacturer, and his whole family. Husband and wife, their son and daughter, their son-in-law and six months' old grandchild—six people in all—were on the same night put to the rest "they had so much longed for".

Major Fey, the former Vice-Chancellor, and his family were found dead in their flat on the morning of March 16, after their servants had been dismissed by the National-Socialists the previous day. No one in Vienna at the time seriously believed in the suicide of the chief witness against Planetta, the murderer of Chancellor Dollfuss, who was about to be made a national hero. Dr. Neustaedter-Stuermer, Secretary of State for Security in the Dollfuss Cabinet, and the man who called upon the National-Socialists to surrender the Chancellery on July 25, 1934, was found dead only a few days later in his house at Moedling, and was also alleged to have committed suicide.

There is no doubt that a great number of suicides were committed to avoid arrest. Dr. von Winterstein, the Attorney-General, ended his own life in the middle of May after having received word that he was about to be arrested by the National-Socialists. Dr. von Froehlichsthal, Dr. Schuschnigg's secretary, killed himself by throwing himself in front of a train when he heard that the S.A. were looking for him. Often a vague assumption that they might be arrested was sufficient to provoke the desperate step, so great was the fear of arrest and ill-treatment. Herr Reitlinger, a well-known Tyrolese industrialist and a sick man, was shot by his daughter at his own request, his daughter following him to death; he had seen a car driving up in front of his house containing, as he thought, members of the S.A. who were looking for him, but actually belonging to and containing friends who had come to look after him. Dr. Egon Friedell, a historian and author of world reputation, took his

own life under a still more tragic misapprehension. His maid was having a love-affair with a Storm Trooper, who came one night with another friend, both wearing uniforms, to see her. The maid was out. Dr. Friedell, seeing Storm Troopers outside refused to open, rushed to his window and threw himself out into the paved courtyard, from the third storey. The two men immediately saw what he was doing, wanted to stop him, but it was too late.

General Zehner, for many years Austrian Minister of War, died in prison, and it has never been established whether or not he actually committed suicide, as was officially announced. Dr. Kurt Sonnenfeld, a well-known Viennese author on the staff of the *Neue Freie Press*, took poison together with his wife and father. Dr. Peter Kuranda, on the staff of the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, voluntarily ended his own life and his mother's. Those who failed at the first attempt tried again until they succeeded. The editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*, Dr. Stefan von Mueller, after having been questioned several times by the secret police and the S.A., made an attempt to kill himself on May 1, but was saved by his wife. Four days later he took the revolver a second time, and this time succeeded. Dr. Rudolf Beer, one of Vienna's best known theatrical producers, who was director of several Vienna theatres, tried to kill himself by taking poison and gassing himself at the same time. He was taken to hospital and his life was saved. The day after he left hospital he shot himself.

Not only politicians and high Government officials, authors and artists, committed suicide. The number of industrialists, business men, doctors and lawyers who ended their lives with their own hands is incomparably higher. During the very first days of the National-Socialist régime a number of leading Austrian university professors took their own lives, among them Dr. Denk, Dr. Nobel, Dr. Knoepfelmacher, Dr. Bayer (the latter together with his daughter). The proprietors of two of Vienna's greatest outfitters' stores, Herr Unger and Herr Gerstl, preferred death to starvation. A number of prominent lawyers and solicitors like Dr. Moritz Sternberg, the doctors Tuerkl (father and son), State Councillor Dr. Zimprich, Dr. Alfred Schwoner (an expert economist and well-known author), and the chief of the



Members of the National Socialist Austrian Legion marching into Salzburg on their return from the Reich on March 31, 1938.

Photo: Associated Press.

Press Department of the Federal Railways, Dr. Schlag, chose the same fate. The list could run into thousands, including many of the best and finest men in Austria's public and artistic life. According to an official announcement, in Vienna alone in March 1938 the death-rate rose by 1577.

A week before the entry of the German troops into Austria long lists had already been prepared by the headquarters of the Austrian National-Socialist party of the names of all those who were to be arrested the moment the official signal was given. In order to find oneself on these lists it was sufficient to be either a Monarchist, a supporter of Dr. Schuschnigg, a sympathizer with the Left, or just simply a Jew. Out of the total of about 30,000 arrests which were made altogether, the following list contains only the names of the most important and prominent of those who were arrested during the two months following March 11, 1938. In many cases the arrested were not even questioned or allowed to get in touch with their relatives or solicitors. Many disappeared without leaving a trace, many were abducted to Dachau and other German concentration camps in the Reich, while others were imprisoned in the Federal Court building in Vienna, in various police prisons, barracks, and prisons.

Those well-known politicians and statesmen who were either arrested or sent to Dachau concentration camp include the following, some of whom were later released:

Federal Chancellor Dr. Schuschnigg.

Former Federal Chancellor Dr. Ender and his son.

Former Federal Chancellor Vaugoin.

Burgomaster of Vienna, Herr Schmitz.

Former Burgomaster of Vienna, Herr Seitz.

Cabinet Minister Dr. Pernter.

Cabinet Minister Herr Watzek.

Cabinet Minister Herr Rott.

Former Cabinet Minister Dr. Draxler.

Provincial Governor of Lower Austria, former Minister Herr Reither.

Former Cabinet Minister Dr. Karwinsky.

Former Cabinet Minister Herr Heinl.

Minister Ludwig, President of the Press Department.

Colonel Adam, Chief of the Government Press Department.

Minister Vollgruber, Austrian Minister to Paris.

Princess Fanny Starhemberg, mother of the former Vice-Chancellor.

Dr. Jordan, Austrian Consul-General at Munich.

Dr. Bielka, Austrian Consul.

Dr. Wasserbaeck, former Press Attaché at the Austrian Legation in Berlin.

Dr. Danneberg, Finance *rapporteur* of Vienna.

State Councillor Kunschak, leader of the Christian trade unions.

Chief of Staff Alexander, leader of the Protective Corps of the Patriotic Front.

Herr von Becker, Chief of the Propaganda Department of the Patriotic Front.

Gendarmerie Commander General Zellburg.

Herr Schoepfer, Director-General of the Federal Railways.

Heimwehr Major Seeger, *aide-de-camp* to Major Fey.

Baron Gautsch, Director of Security, Lower Austria.

Herr Bechynie, Director of Security, Salzburg.

Dr. Waitz, Archbishop of Salzburg.

Dr. Gfoellner, Archbishop of Linz.

Dr. Pawlikowski, Archbishop of Graz.

} (later released)

Major Frankl.

Herr Riedl, Director of the Vienna Urania.

Former Cabinet Minister Dr. Kienboeck, President of the Austrian National Bank.

Hofrat Weiser, of the Vienna Police.

Hofrat Boehm, of the Vienna Police,
and many others.

Prominent Monarchist leaders arrested included:

Archduke Josef Ferdinand (65 years of age); later released from Dachau.

Archduke Anton (later released).

Prince Karl Emil Fuerstenberg.

Count Hoyos, President of the Austrian Federal Diet.

Prince Ernst von Hohenberg, son of Archduke Franz Ferdinand murdered at Serajevo.

Prince Max von Hohenberg.

Count Paul Eszterhazy.

Count Meran.

Count Thun.

Count Sicco-Noris.

Count Fahdel.

Baron Hennestein.

Minister Baron Wiesner, Leader of the Austrian Legitimists.

Baron Werckmann, last secretary to the late Emperor Charles; arrested after an attempted suicide.

Baron Mirbach.

General Englisch-Poparich.

Gendarmerie Colonel Vogelhuber.

Director Ohnmacht, of the Catholic Action.

Herr Putz, editor of the *Linzer Volksblatt*.

Herr Kerschbaum, editor of the *Neuigkeitsweltblatt*.

Dr. Reisinger, Leader of the Legitimists in the Tyrol.

Prominent Austrian Jews included:

State Councillor Dr. Desider Friedmann, President of the Vienna Kultusgemeinde.

Dr. Jakob Ehrlich, Town Councillor of Vienna (72 years of age), who died at Dachau.

Hofrat Dr. Frankfurter (82 years of age), Director of the Vienna University Library.

Baron Louis Rothschild.

Professor Dr. Otto Loewy, Nobel Prize winner (later released).

Professor Ferdinand Blumenthal, famous cancer specialist.

Dr. Oppenheim, President of the Union of Austrian Jews.

Professor Heinrich Neumann, famous ear and throat specialist.

Dr. Richard Schlesinger, Grand Master of the Vienna Freemasons' Lodge.

All officials of the Austrian Freemason lodges.

The entire Board of Directors of the Vienna Israelite Kultusgemeinde.

Herr Siegmund Bosel, former President of the Union Bank.

Dr. Emil Loeb, editor of the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*.

The four brothers Schiffmann, owners of a Vienna department store.

Oskar Gruenbaum, owner of the most well-known Vienna fashion-house.

Fritz Gruenbaum, well-known Viennese comedian.

Raoul Auernheimer, well-known author (died at Dachau).

Felix Salten, well-known author.

Ludwig Hirschfeld, author.

A daughter of Herr Bruno Walter, the famous conductor.

Others included:

Dr. Rehrl, Provincial Governor of Salzburg.

Professor Othmar Spann, a former "National".

Dr. Walter Riehl, founder of Austrian National Socialism, but an opponent of Habicht and Frauenfeld.

Major Eiffler, former Commander of the Social Democratic Schutzbund.

Maria Kramer-Deutsch, wife of Dr. Julius Deutsch, Vienna Schutzbund leader.

Herr Hannes Schneider, famous Austrian ski-teacher.

Many thousands more were arrested, including the following groups:

All leading members of the former Social Democratic party.

All persons known to be or denounced as being Communists.

All Jews who had contributed more than 20,000 schillings to Dr. Schuschnigg's plebiscite-fund.

The entire staff of all democratic papers and leading Catholic papers so far as they had not escaped.

These arrests were carried out by the German secret police, while the Vienna police remained completely suppressed. The secret police (*Gestapo*) had their headquarters at the Hotel Metropol, one of Vienna's largest hotels, but controlled besides all former large police barracks, the central building of the Vienna police at the Schottenring and many others, and took charge of aliens' regulations, passport offices, and the like.

Arrests and cross-examinations were frequently preceded by house-searches, which in many cases were made for the express purpose of finding material which was to justify arrest. I myself know of a good number of cases where the police or other searching parties themselves smuggled forbidden material, preferably Communist pamphlets, into the premises of those under suspicion. Suddenly the policeman takes such a forbidden pamphlet or newspaper from the bookshelf or out of a drawer, which the owner of the flat has never possessed or even seen. But it is sufficient proof to place him under arrest for sympathy with "treacherous" elements. He may either buy himself out of gaol immediately by signing a paper in which he renounces his entire fortune, or else he is made to pay a heavy fine for the possession of a document which is entirely unknown to him.

A novel kind of arrest was practised by the secret police in the streets. Two people walking along a street in Vienna, neither of them wearing a swastika, would suddenly find themselves separated by agents of the secret police. One would be taken to the left, the other to the right. Both would be questioned separately about what they had just been discussing. If their respective statements tallied, and their conversation had been

harmless, they would be allowed to proceed. But the slightest contradiction would lead to the arrest of both on a charge of "secret conspiracy". This practice has of late acquired such proportions that two people meeting each other in the street, before speaking about anything else, have a short talk together which they agree to repeat to the police should they become "separated" later on during their conversation.

It is hard to estimate the amount of papers, books, and documents which have been burnt by their owners all over Austria since March 11. Almost anybody and everybody I knew in Vienna, among them many people even of Nationalistic feelings, and many non-Jews, burnt during those first days of upheaval everything which might appear only to compromise them in the eyes of the National-Socialists. The most innocent of books and notebooks found during a search were liable to be regarded as high treason and dangerous to the State and to cause their harmless and ignorant owners to be sent to prison. It goes without saying that everything written and published in Austria against National Socialism was immediately seized and destroyed, and one of the first public bonfires of books was held on a square in Salzburg.

It will be recalled from an earlier chapter that during Dr. Schuschnigg's fight against National-Socialist propaganda in 1934 National-Socialists caught fouling house-walls, public buildings, and pavements with slogans and insulting inscriptions had been formed into "scrubbing squads" and forced to clean up their own jobs themselves. These "scrubbing squads", which at the time were wildly denounced by the National-Socialists, were revived not only Vienna but throughout Austria in a much more severe form. Between March 9 and 11 the Schuschnigg plebiscite had been prepared for by the Government with a widespread propaganda campaign, in the course of which slogans like "For Schuschnigg—Yes!" were painted with chalk and paint on walls, trees, and the pavement.

Immediately after the arrival of the German troops groups of young Storm Troopers amused themselves by rounding up groups of Jews, and often Jewesses, mostly well-dressed, in the streets and forcing them to scrub these inscriptions off. In

many cases those compelled to do the scrubbing were not given water but an especially strong lotion which burnt not only the hands of the victims but also their dresses and knees, since they were compelled to kneel down on the pavement on which the poisonous liquid had been poured. Jewish ladies who happened to wear furs were preferred for this work; they were compelled to use their furs to scrub with. The victims of these practices in many cases spent weeks in hospital suffering from burns on their hands and legs.

In some of the provinces where inscriptions had been painted on trees and house-walls resident Jewish inhabitants were compelled to scratch them off the trees and walls with their bare finger-nails. They were not allowed to bandage their bleeding hands but had to go on, in spite of the pain, until the last trace of the inscriptions had disappeared.

Elsewhere conditions were similar, if not worse. The premises of the Vienna Israelite Kultusgemeinde and a number of synagogues in the Inner City which had been occupied were fouled and soiled beyond description by Storm Troopers who had taken possession of them. Groups of innocent people who happened not to wear swastika badges would then be caught in the streets and compelled to clean the places up with their bare hands. After regular orgies had been celebrated by the S.A. and S.S. in their barracks and in villas whose owners had fled, "slaves" were brought in the morning and compelled to clean the soiled places. Motor-cars which had been requisitioned by the S.A. were driven up covered with mud and dirt in front of coffee-houses, the coffee-houses themselves stormed by the S.A., and Jews forced to go out and wash the cars. In barracks and administration offices this and similar work was given when possible to Jewesses. Colonel Adam, the former Chief of the Government Press Department, Minister Ludwig, and other non-Jewish prisoners were compelled to wash motor-cars and clean lavatories, and with their bare hands since they were given neither brushes nor rags.

Consequently the Jewish population kept at home as much as possible. But that did not save them from further tribulations. House-porters were asked by the S.A. to furnish complete lists of the Jewish inhabitants of their houses, who were then fetched

out at any hour of the day or night to do all kinds of humiliating work, old people not being spared. It occurred repeatedly that doctors were fetched away from the bedside of their patients, lawyers seized in the middle of consultations, and women dragged from their beds in the middle of the night by youthful Storm Troopers, to wash motor-cars and clean lavatories.

Justice however must be done to the Reich German army officers who, as I have witnessed myself, took the strongest possible steps whenever they had occasion to prevent such outrages. I have myself seen a German army officer who happened to come across a "scrubbing squad" in the street take charge, release the victims at once, and compel the onlooking S.A. men to complete the work they had tried to force them to do. In another case a group of Storm Trooper hooligans who had played the same game was arrested on the spot by German officers who happened to pass by. In fact, not only did the German regular army not take part in these outrages, but they endeavoured wherever possible to prevent them. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of the National-Socialist party nor of the police, because all these outrages took place with the knowledge of higher party officers, if not actually by their orders, and under the very eyes of the police, who took great care not to interfere.

Epilogue

ON SUNDAY April 10, 1938, a plebiscite was held throughout Austria and the German Reich on the question of the union of Austria with Germany. The result was 99.75 per cent. of a total of 4.3 million votes cast, in favour of the union, as far as Austria was concerned.

There may be some still of the opinion, after having read through this book, that this result reflected the true wish of the Austrian people. It is only for this reason that we shall have to dwell shortly on this plebiscite. Its result, of course, was already clear and beyond doubt on March 13—that is, four whole weeks earlier, since the Anschluss on which it was proposed to vote on April 10 was then already an accomplished fact.

No one will seriously believe, had the result of the plebiscite been unfavourable—if such a thing indeed could have been possible—that the German troops would have withdrawn and that former conditions would have been restored. The fact itself was undisputably established on March 13, and what is interesting in this connexion is not the plebiscite itself but the methods with which it was conducted.

According to law the voting was to be held in secret. That meant that normally voters would have to retire into private booths to make their marks secretly on their voting papers which they were then to deposit, in sealed envelopes, in a box. The voting papers were so arranged that beneath the question a large circle was printed, under which stood the word "Yes", while further below on the paper there was a considerably smaller circle with the inscription underneath "No". Into one of these circles the voter's cross was to be inserted, but the proportions of the two circles were such that inevitably the smaller circle would have escaped the notice of most people. The very arrangement of the paper made the result certain, at

least among the masses of the uneducated sections of the population.

The actual procedure of the voting, however, went still further in influencing the vote. According to the German regulations any group of voters who arrived first at the polling booth after polling had started was entitled to demand that the voting should take place openly. Once this demand was made withdrawal into a cell ceased to be compulsory, but did not remain even optional! Now in most polling stations groups of S.A. or S.S. men or other enthusiastic National-Socialists arrived early before the opening, clamouring frenziedly for an open poll, because "enthusiasm was so great that everybody might just as well declare himself openly in favour of the Fuehrer." This declaration was immediately posted inside polling stations, and all persons arriving after that had to conform and to mark their papers openly and in front of everybody present, including the officials conducting the plebiscite. With almost super-human courage anyone, of course, would have been able to put his cross into the "No" circle in front of the amazed officials, partisans, and onlookers, and enjoy the privilege of being black-listed immediately as "anti-National". Nearly as much courage was required by these few who did actually, at the few stations where the secret booths had been retained, insist on sealed envelopes and access to them. Their names, too, were immediately registered. One voter in four hundred showed that courage, but from the point of view of deciding the course of the plebiscite it was obviously fanatical.

Apart from its actual result another consequence attended the plebiscite still more embarrassing for the non-Nazi population—the hermetic sealing of Austria's frontiers, supposed to be originally up to the day of the plebiscite, but which in fact lasted for many weeks after it. During the first days after the occupation—at least so far as Austrian authorities were concerned—Austrian citizens had still been able to leave the country, although Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia had closed their frontiers against Austrians. But towards March 25 the ex-German frontier was also closed hermetically against ex-Austrians! Never in all preceding years had any

such strict measures been taken in Germany itself. Jews and non-sympathizers with the National-Socialist régime in Germany had always been at liberty to leave the Reich of their own free will, taking part of their property or money (between 50 and 15 per cent.) with them. Of such a hope Austrian Jews, Monarchists, and Socialists were deprived from the very beginning. This fact added greatly to the number of suicides. Many would-be emigrants would undoubtedly have preferred to leave the country, leaving behind 90 per cent. or even the whole of their property in order to start up again abroad, but the fact that during those terrible days they were completely imprisoned within the frontiers, not even of Germany, but of a German province, drove many of them to death.

The reason given for this ban on Austrians leaving the country had officially been that, before the plebiscite, passport questions arising from the Anschluss and the amalgamation of the two States could not be settled. But even after the plebiscite Jews were still forbidden to emigrate. Whoever tried to force his way out of Austria had to go through an almost undecipherable labyrinth of red tape. He had to produce twelve different certificates which were all to prove that he was not in arrears for any kind of tax. Even if he had no dog, he had to prove he was not in arrears with his dog tax. Even if he was himself a domestic servant he had to prove that he was not in arrears with his tax on domestic servants. Each of these certificates meant waiting in a queue for a whole day, or even longer, at the respective Government office. And it was liable to happen at any moment that an official would arrive and declare that "Aryans" were to be given precedence, and Jews who had been waiting for many hours would have to return home and start waiting again the next morning, with possibly the same result. One might obtain all necessary certificates within three weeks, in the course of which, however, most of the certificates would have lost their validity, being valid for not more than a fortnight. That would mean queuing again. Thousands of people, standing in a line four-deep, were and still are waiting from the early hours of the morning in front of the passport office of the secret police in the Braeunerstrasse in Vienna, for their

permit to leave the country. All Vienna Consulates are virtually besieged day after day by masses of applicants for visas and people who require information concerning possibilities of emigration. Applications handed in by Jews are often left over for many weeks without being dealt with, while the certificates obtained with so great trouble expire. Every kind of chicanery and red tape stands in the way of the unhappy man who would leave this country. And yet only a few lose their courage and give up the attempt. For nearly all, no length of time, no amount of trouble is too much for the chance of at last shaking the dust of Austria from their shoes.

All this chicanery becomes all the more incomprehensible considering that the National-Socialists themselves have evolved a detailed scheme according to which all Jews will have to have left Austria by the end of 1942. In its issue of April 25 the Vienna edition of the *Voelkischer Beobachter* published an article under the heading, "How are we to get rid of the Jews?" from which I quote:

"By 1942 the Jewish element in Vienna will have to be extirpated and disappear completely. No shop, no business enterprise by that time will be allowed to remain under Jewish management. No Jew will be allowed to have opportunities for making money anywhere. And with the exception of certain streets where old Jews and Jewesses may be allowed to use their money—the export of which is forbidden—nothing must betray in the outward appearance of the city the fact that once in this town Germans had no choice but to eat, like poor Lazarus, crumbs fallen from the spendthrift Jew's table. This order will be carried out, and no one has the right to become impatient meanwhile.

"Those who know the real view held by the Viennese on the Jewish question will perhaps be surprised at the idea of allowing four years to elapse before *the execution of the economic death-sentence on the Jews*. Four years may seem far too long. They might think it would have been sufficient to say: 'The Jew has got to go, and his money remains behind!' They may think it might have been better to turn the Jews naked across the nearest frontier. Such an attitude is understandable. But Germany—and this must be remembered by everybody—is a

constitutional State. That means that in our Reich nothing can be done without a legal basis. No one needs to lose patience. The 'paper war', the red tape necessary for this procedure may be annoying, but that it will ultimately lead to success, in a peaceful and orderly manner, is amply proved by the experience of five years in the Reich.

"Jews, give up all your hopes! The network of our organization is so close that you will not find a single hole through which to steal back to the flesh-pots of Egypt. There is only one thing left to you: to emigrate, provided anyone is prepared to receive you. We shall not allow ourselves to be duped once more as we were years ago in the old Reich. Jews stealing away from Austria will not be allowed to steal any part of their fortunes away with them!"

The plebiscite of April 10 is long over.

The "order" for the emigration of the Jews has now long been issued.

Yet an attempt by a Jew to "steal away from Austria" only brings him tribulation, and only an infinitely small percentage of the hundreds of thousands who are longing to emigrate is allowed the chance of creating for itself a new life and existence outside.

Who, then, fares well in Austria?

How do those fare who for five long years had fought an embittered struggle in Austria to bring about this change—the Austrian National-Socialists?

It might have been supposed that just now they would be knowing enthusiasm without bounds.

Yet there is much to indicate that this is far from being the case.

Many National-Socialists in Austria, so far as they were and are true and genuine Austrians, have refused to accept the new situation, and many others have been plunged into such a state of depression and bitter disappointment that in many cases measures have had to be taken against them by their Reich-German "superiors".

The greatest disappointment is of course felt at the fact that the establishment of a National-Socialist régime in Austria

had to go hand in hand with the surrender of Austria's independence as a State, that this country, loved also by the National-Socialists as their own native country, should have become a mere province of Greater Germany. Not only is Austria now deprived of all her characteristic individuality, but all those zealous wearers of the swastika who for five years had shed their blood for a National-Socialist Austria, who had hoped that one day they would be rewarded with roles in the rulership of their "regenerated Austrian" country, now realize that they have been duped beyond their worst fears. For Greater Germany treats Austria to-day like a conquered land. The Army, the Police, the Gendarmery have been sent away, all important posts have been filled by Reich-German National-Socialists; and the Austrians, among them even the bravest fighters of the party, find themselves pushed into the background and given inferior positions with hardly any influence at all.

This feeling was manifest on the very day of Herr Hitler's entry into Vienna, on March 14, 1938. The front rows were occupied by Reich-German troops; at official receptions the stands and the best seats were reserved for the "conquerors"; at the great troop review of March 15 the Austrian National-Socialists were given modest places in some hidden corner, as far away as possible from the Fuehrer, for whom many of them had more than once risked liberty and life.

Travelling across the length of Austria late in March 1938, from Vienna to the Swiss frontier, I made a special point of inquiring wherever possible—at Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Linz, and Feldkirch—of the Austrian National-Socialists I met in the train, at stations, and elsewhere, what they thought of the new development.

Their answer was invariably the same stereotyped reply:

"Never had we imagined that things would happen like this! Never had we thought that one day we would have to be the 'Bummerln' of the Prussians, doing all their dirty work, getting nothing for it, and in the end becoming their laughing stocks. What we wanted was a free and independent National-Socialist Austria. We wanted to show what we were able to accomplish and to achieve by ourselves. We wanted an Anschluss of two independent States, with equal rights and



Photo : Keystone.
Viennese looking at the revised map of Germany and Austria amalgamated as one, displayed in a Vienna bookshop.

on an equal footing; but never did we want or expect to be governed from Berlin."

That may safely be taken as the true opinion of the old National-Socialist partisans.

The disappointment felt about the new situation by the backers and wire-pullers, those who for years had financed the movement in Austria, the heavy industrialists and high officials in the administration who had sponsored it, is no less acute and bitter. They, too, have to realize that with one single stroke they were deprived of all means of further free activity, that they had lost their independent standing once and for all. They found themselves suddenly included in Germany's strict war-basis economy, receiving certainly a number of big orders but "in the interest of the Four-Year-Plan" at such low margins of profit to themselves as to disillusion them about being any better off than on the peaceful Austrian basis.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that since the entry of the German troops into Austria the economic reconstruction of the country has been begun on a really large and comprehensive scale. A thorough and very energetic exploitation of Austria's resources, of its timber and water-power, was begun at once. No time was lost in the creation of new industries, especially of the Hermann Goering works at Linz, where a number of Austria's unemployed found work. The promise made for many long years, that with one stroke Austria's entire unemployment would be abolished, has of course not been fulfilled. On the contrary there is a general state of apprehension about interference with Jewish and Monarchist capitalists, and its possible effect within a short time on unemployment. Although dismissals are no longer permitted, the employers of many concerns are afraid of their failure through boycott or inexperienced management. A number of Austrian unemployed have on the other hand been billeted at places in the Reich.

The civil servants and high bureaucracy, so far as they had any sympathy with National Socialism, do not feel very differently. The incorporation of Austria in the Reich, the re-division of the country into six provinces as against nine before, and the transfer of services and departments from

Vienna to Berlin, have meant the retirement on pension or even the subordination of many higher Austrian civil servants.

The penetration of high German officials into Austrian administration stopped nowhere, Germans taking over even the highest posts. As early as on April 26 Herr Buerckel was made the sole ruler of Austria, and Dr. Seyss-Inquart, the "Reichsstatthalter", had to be content with a position subordinate to him. The so-called Austrian "Government", the Cabinet of Dr. Seyss-Inquart, had hardly more than a paper existence, and in May another three of its Ministers, all of them old National-Socialist party men—Dr. Glaise-Horstenau, Dr. Hueber and Dr. Neumayer—were dismissed; all decisions concerning Austria were referred to Berlin; and the guidance of their own destiny has by now been taken completely out of the hands of the Austrians.

The tone and style in which Herr Buerckel henceforth proposed to rule Austria may best be gauged from his declarations on the Jewish question. In a decree issued on April 28, 1938—that is, after Dr. Seyss-Inquart's transfer to a subordinate position—he literally declared:

"Finally, it appears to me to be important to announce, with regard to certain unsafe elements, that the process of Aryanizing Vienna will be conducted by myself personally as from to-day. I shall introduce the necessary measures, on an absolutely lawful basis, but for that reason in an all the more thorough manner.

"It follows from this that I will not allow the least interference with this my task. Should I ever be compelled to have to rely on help, I shall announce this in good time. The public will furthermore receive information as to the state of progress in these matters from time to time."

A further rebuke at the hands of Herr Buerckel was offered to the Austrian National-Socialists when they attempted to make Captain Leopold, the former leader of the illegal movement, honorary citizen of the town of Krems in Lower Austria, and to name a street after him. Herr Buerckel immediately decreed that it was forbidden, for the time of his activity in Austria, for officials of the party to accept honorary citizenships. Since the new order in Austria necessitated in fact the

renaming of a great number of streets and squares, Herr Buerckel proposed for this purpose the choice of historic names of those who had fallen in the struggle for National Socialism. Besides the name of the Reich Chancellor only the names of those like Herr Hess and Field-Marshal Goering were permitted to be chosen, as having already achieved historic importance. At all events it was and remained forbidden to name streets and squares with his own name or names of members of the Austrian National-Socialist leadership group.

The conflict is kept below the surface. But disappointment and resentment against the new rulers continues to grow among the old Austrian National-Socialists.

On Tuesday, April 26, an "illegal" pamphlet suddenly made its appearance in Vienna, the authors of which the secret police were unable to trace. It was addressed to "All National-Socialist Fighters of Austria!" It was reproduced in the *Basler Nationalzeitung*, a Swiss newspaper, and I give it below:

"Have we suffered persecution for years, have we endured misery and privations, have we fought and bled for our freedom only to have thrust now upon us, who ourselves had assumed power, a tutelage not only unbearable but injurious to the dignity of our freedom-loving people? To-day we have to ask this question of the whole National-Socialist people of Austria: Are there none among ourselves who have the abilities necessary to cope with those tasks which to-day are being dealt with throughout Austria by party officials from Berlin and Munich? Was it really necessary to appoint a Reich "Commissar" for Austria, to bring about this union of Austria with the Reich? Was it necessary to grant him those full powers and to reduce to the ranks of understrappers and handymen of the Reich Commissar our own administrators from the capital to the smallest village? Are our own Reichsstatthalter (Dr. Seyss-Inquart) and our own Austrian Ministers to have nothing to do henceforth but to obey and carry out 'orders' of this Commissar? Many things have happened in the past weeks which have aroused the deep indignation of the old combatants of the Austrian National-Socialist movement, and we have passed over them in silence for the sake of the great common

cause. But now this silence must end, for it has been driven home to us that it is apparently not the intention of our new rulers to do honour to, nor to recognize *our* great cause for which we have fought and suffered for years. Have we fought for these gentlemen of the Reich, for these party officials from Berlin, that they might swarm over our entire country and make themselves comfortable in well-paid posts, that they might sit in easy chairs and issue orders to us? Did we fight in order that a whole organization might enter our country, not to struggle with the enemies of the State, but to supervise and watch over our own party members? It is the simple and only natural demand of this hour that we should raise our voices now and protest against the appointment of a Reich Commissar with unlimited powers. As a sign of our protest we hereby demand that our own leaders shall forthwith resign from their posts as Ministers before the whole world. Let the world realize thereby that one proud people has joined another proud people, and that the condition of their unity is the slogan: 'Equality for both sides'!

This pamphlet was signed: "For the National-Socialist Movement of Austria."

To it Herr Buerckel replied in a decree issued on May 7, in which he stated:

"The appointment of individuals to leading positions in the State and in the party depends on their answers given to the following questions:

- "1. Since when has the applicant publicly professed his National-Socialist convictions?
- "2. How great were the sacrifices by which he proved his devotion to National Socialism?
- "3. Is he fitted, both from the moral and the material point of view, to be appointed to this or that office?

"It must in no circumstances be allowed to happen that a man proved to have deserved well shall be excluded from a particular office under pretext of his lack of ability to fill it. On the other hand it is just as essential, for the sake of our task of the future, that an applicant's real and genuine ability to fill a particular office shall be proved.

"We cannot afford the luxury of appointing new leaders every day. If sometimes mistakes are made in the making of appointments, without actually leading to serious damage to the party, it will be better in all circumstances to create stability of leadership than uncertainty by constant changes. You will therefore understand me rightly if I say that leaders, once they have been appointed can only be removed for the most stringent of reasons.

"But even so those seeking to overthrow leaders from their positions will in no circumstances take over those positions themselves."

To this decree, which was published under the heading "An Open Word", Herr Buerckel received an answer in a publication called "Newsletter of the National-Socialist Movement of Austria", which began with the words:

"Resign, Herr Reich Commissar:

"We can promise you, Herr Reich Commissar, that in the future we shall not mince words about what is troubling us. We have not the slightest intention of granting you those six months which you are demanding of us to fulfil your duties and complete your task. We consider that your time has long been up and your task more than completed. In fact you have proved by your activity that you are the worst fitted man who could be chosen for your post. We consider that you are lacking all those abilities, political and personal, which are the essential and indispensable conditions for the position with which you have been entrusted."

Instead of the name of an author, this answer was again signed:

"For the National-Socialist Movement of Austria!"

On June 15 the dissatisfaction had acquired such proportions that Herr Hitler, at the express request of Dr. Seyss-Inquart and 1200 Austrian National-Socialists, decided to go to Vienna himself on June 17 to convince himself of the actual situation and remove some of the grievances of his "old combatants".

The occupation of Austria and her subsequent incorporation in the German Reich were necessary, according to the argument put forth by Herr Hitler, because he conceived it his duty to

liberate his German comrades in that country and to bring fulfilment to the wishes voiced by them. The manner in which this duty has been discharged by the Fuehrer has become apparent from the first three months which have passed since the occupation. The reason given for it may well be called a pretext. Herr Hitler's desire for expansion and fulfilment of his imperialistic aims has been cloaked in a similar way to that once attempted by Napoleon when, in the opening years of the last century, he set out on his campaigns of conquest "in order to give the world the freedom which France had achieved by her struggle."

Austria is the first victim of Germany's will to expand. Her sacrifice, heavy and ruinous as it has proved to be for a great part of her people, may yet have served to open the eyes of the world. Immediately after the occupation of Vienna the plans of the Greater German Reich in the Danubian Basin have emerged clearly and unmistakably in their gigantic outline, and the manner in which the union of Austria with the Reich has been brought about has helped to demonstrate to the democratic States to what goal leniency and tolerance of Germany's ambitions must ultimately lead. In the case of Czechoslovakia, Great Britain has already given proof that she has realized the importance of Central Europe for peace in Europe and the entire world, now that Vienna has fallen. In Hungary and Rumania resistance to Herr Hitler's aims has of late sensibly stiffened, and Poland also gradually obtains a clearer vision of what she has to expect of an alliance with Germany.

Austria's five-year long struggle for her independence has come to its end. Force has won its victory over the weapons of culture and civilization. A small State can only be protected by collective security, and once it was clear that collective security had failed, its fate was sealed.

Thus died Austria.

But it is to be hoped that her sacrifice was not made in vain, and that the end of Austria may yet help to preserve the possibilities of further existence to other, more fortunate, countries. At least a part of those tasks would then be fulfilled which this small and courageous country during its lifetime always considered among its highest duties.